

## ABSTRACT

Title of Document: DIVERSITY VS. THE DOCTORATE (1967-2008): THE EXPERIENCES OF BLACK AND LATINO STUDENTS THEN AND NOW

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Since its inception in 1965, Affirmative Action has played a pivotal role in integrating predominantly white institutions of higher education with Black and Brown faces. However, at the doctoral level only marginal increases have been made over the past 30 years in the number of Black and Latino students awarded Ph.D.s. In an effort to better understand the historical phenomenon of under-representation at the doctoral level among Black and Latino students, a qualitative research study was designed that examined both the historical evolution of their lived experiences at predominantly white institutions, and the forms of capital they used to navigate through the academy. Understanding and comparing how these students have been able to navigate through these historically excluded spaces was a key goal of this research because it lent itself to the construction of a “new story” of higher education. In addition to understanding their lived experiences and their use of social/cultural capital, their narratives were also used to explore the broader concept

of diversity and how it has functioned within American culture over time. The cultural landscape of higher education was an ideal locale to investigate the past and current state of race in America because much of what happens within university and college settings reflects the broader race relations of society at large.

Affirmative Action served as the backdrop to construct the two historical time periods from which I drew my study participants: “Affirmative Action Implementation” and “Affirmative Action Dismemberment.” A total of eight participants were recruited according to when they started their doctoral programs and divided into two comparison groups: *first generation* (4) and *second generation* (4). Critical Race Theory (CRT), Latino Critical Race Theory (LatCRT), and a *Community Cultural Wealth* framework were used as the theoretical lens to situate the findings. Several patterns emerged including: race and cultural space; persistence; and social activism.

DIVERSITY VS. THE DOCTORATE (1967-2008): THE EXPERIENCES OF  
BLACK AND LATINO STUDENTS THEN AND NOW

By

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## Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to the memory of my late grandmother, Doretha McRae.

She has been an angel from above watching and protecting over me throughout my journey. I also dedicate this dissertation to my mother for all the sacrifices she made in order to get me to this point.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE

### REVIEW

*I had a fellowship in Columbia University's history Ph.D. program...It was really rough going, not because the work was hard but because I had no academic network and everyone seemed so smart. I felt very lonely and isolated. Students in the history program seemed to have networks outside the university in the greater New York area, as did I, but I could not connect with anyone, and as usual being the only black person made me very self-conscious. Everyone talked the talk, and I did not learn to trust my intellect (White, 2008, p.89-91).*

*I found myself to be one of two African American students in my cohort. Although accustomed to being in the category of 'one of' or 'only black' in my classes for much of my academic career, this experience was still daunting at times...It is disheartening to feel alone in the sometimes-cruel world of the academy. It is particularly disconcerting to know that neither one's race nor gender has currency (Peters, 2005, p. 200-202).*

In the two epigraphs above, both Deborah Gray White and April Peters reflect on how the doctoral process had been isolating and alienating for them as students of color. However, what's particularly interesting to note is that these reflections are from two completely different time periods. When White pursued her doctorate in the early seventies at the latter end of the civil rights era she may not have imagined

that 30 years later, Peters would still be experiencing the same challenges in the twenty-first century, post civil-rights era. What do these mirror reflections tell us about the doctoral experience for students of color over time? How do race, class, and gender impact the doctoral process? How are the experiences of doctoral students of color distinct from their white counterparts? These questions framed the beginning of my inquiry and guided the development of the research questions, purpose, and methodology for this study. One of my primary missions was to learn whether those answers held the key to solving the problem of persistent under-representation of Black and Latino Doctoral students in the academy.

According to U.S Census Bureau projections, minorities will account for 36.2% of the entire United States population by 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). However, the number of doctorates awarded will likely remain disproportionately low despite the rapid shifts in population demographics. From 1976-77 to 2003-04 the number of doctorates awarded to *all* minorities only rose from 7.7% to 15.2% (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2005). Of the 43, 398 doctorates conferred during the 2003-04 school year, African Americans accounted for 2,726 (5.4 %) and Latinos accounted for 1,558 (3.2 %) of that total. (Cook & Cordova, 2006, Table 18). In the late 1980s interest and recognition of this problem peaked and several federal and private programs were initiated to encourage participation of minority and low-income students at the doctoral level<sup>1</sup>. Despite the implementation of federal and privately funded initiatives to increase the presence of minority students pursuing and earning doctorates, the problem of severe under-representation

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<sup>1</sup> Ronald E. McNair program and Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship are two example of the programs initiated.

persists, particularly for Black and Latino students. Yosso (2006) provides an interesting narrative of the Chicano pipeline to examine the ways in which under-representation takes form.

We begin with 100 Chicana and Chicano students at the elementary level, noting that 56 drop out of high school and 44 continue on to graduate. Of the 44 who graduate from high school about 26 continue on toward some form of post-secondary education. Of those 26 approximately 17 enroll in community colleges and nine enroll at 4 year-institutions. Of those 17 in community colleges, only one will transfer to a 4-year institution. Of the nine Chicanas/os attending a 4-year institution and the one community college transfer student, seven will graduate with a baccalaureate degree. Finally two Chicana/o students will continue on to earn a graduate or professional degree and less than one will receive a doctorate (Yosso, 2006, p. 4).

These figures along the pipeline are staggering and shed light on the reasons why very few Black and Latino doctoral students are present within the academy. At each stage of the pipeline these student populations must combat all sorts of obstacles in order to make it through to the end. Those that do endure the pathway to the doctorate sometimes do so at the expense of being further marginalized as the “token” student and are sometimes subject to isolation from their family and communities because of inevitable identity shifts.

In an effort to better understand the historical phenomenon of under-representation at the doctoral level among Black and Latino students, I designed a qualitative research study that examined both the historical evolution of their lived

experiences at predominantly white institutions (PWIs), and the forms of capital they used to navigate through the academy. Understanding and comparing how these students have been able to navigate through these historically excluded spaces was key because it lent itself to the construction of a “new story” of higher education. In addition to understanding their lived experiences and their use of social/cultural capital, I also used their narratives to explore the broader concept of diversity and how it has functioned within American culture over time. The cultural landscape of higher education was an ideal locale to investigate the past and current state of race in America because much of what happens within university and college settings reflects the broader race relations of society at large. “Higher education ‘mirrors, just as it did in earlier eras, the values, the divisions, and the debates within the larger society, and in fact college campuses are often the arenas in which schisms and conflicting values of the larger society are played out’” (Cited in Willie, 2003, p. 11).

Because Affirmative Action has been pivotal in institutionalizing diversity as a symbolic term and literally in the number of doors opened for Black and Brown faces, it was used as the guiding light in laying the foundation and context for this topic. It also served as the backdrop to construct the two historical time periods from which I drew my study participants: “Affirmative Action Implementation” and “Affirmative Action Dismemberment.” Participants were recruited according to when they started their doctoral programs and divided into two comparison groups: *first generation* and *second generation*. The title of this dissertation “Diversity vs. the Doctorate (1967-2008): The Experiences of Black and Latino Students Then and Now,” was also built around the history of Affirmative Action because it is a

reference to the numerous court cases brought about challenging the implementation of diversity in America. Given the ongoing opposition to prioritizing diversity within higher education it became clear while conducting this research that there is a very visible battle between diversity and the doctorate. Furthermore, new research conducted by the *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* found that the number of doctorates awarded to African Americans in 2006 and 2007 declined from an all time high in 2004 (“Once Again Decline”, 2007). Those declines may or may not be linked to decreases in minority based initiatives but, for these exact reasons, this particular research is an urgent topic to consider within and outside of American higher education.

In the past two decades, the United States has undergone major shifts in its definition and commitment to diversity because of persistent challenges to numerous diversity initiatives, including but not limited to Affirmative Action. “There is no doubt that affirmative action has faced serious challenges in the last three decades. The Reagan and Bush administrations worked hard to shift the views of the courts on affirmative action and mounted an offensive campaign to abolish it as it was conceptualized” (cited in Garcia, 1997, p. 15). These shifting notions are being felt particularly hard within the spaces of American Higher Education.

Nearly every form of affirmative action geared toward improving the educational opportunity for students of color and women has endured public scrutiny. Admissions criteria and financial aid awards based on race have received the lion’s share of attention for their perceived bias against white students (Hurtado & Navia, 1997, p. 106).

The legal pressures and scrutiny that many PWIs must confront regarding their diversity policies is largely felt by students historically under-represented within higher education. These students are bearing the brunt of this burden because the mandates advocating for their presence, particularly within PWIs, is being diminished. As a result, it is vital to consider research such as this study that can shed light on how these changes are affecting the experiences of marginalized student populations. Another reason why learning more about doctoral students of color is an urgent matter is because their under-representation also impacts faculty representation along the educational pipeline. “Some studies indicate that the problem of under-representation of faculty of color is one of supply and that the answer is to increase the number of doctorate recipients from communities of color” (Turner & Myers, 1997, p. 131). Though the extent to which increasing doctoral recipients will *entirely* eliminate the under-representation of faculty of color is dubious, it still is an important contributing factor. Furthermore, the presence of Black and Latino scholars also impacts the composition of scholarship being formulated in the academy.

On a broader scale this research is also particularly important because the ramifications of low minority representation in doctoral education impacts the socio-economic composition of minority communities, occupational distribution, and the racial climate of American business corporations and institutions of higher education. Furthermore, lower educational attainment among African American and Latino communities is a critical concern because the economy is rapidly changing and employment requirements are ever increasing. “In the postindustrial era, or the

Information age, a high school diploma no longer assures you a decent job or even a livable wage,” in part because job growth has occurred primarily at the very top and the very bottom of the job scale (Gordon Nembhard, 2005, p. 225). As a result of lower education, economic inequality has grown for African American and Latino communities because without the necessary degrees and qualifications they cannot compete at the top of the job market. The underemployment and underutilization of Black and Latino communities will not only continue to increase the socio-economic divide between them and the white majority, it will also impact the entire economy and weaken the United States’ chances of being able to compete in the global market. “The underutilization and underdevelopment not only deprive Black people of opportunities to improve their material welfare, but also cost the nation the economic contribution they could make if they had better employment and income opportunities” (Freeman, 2005, p.148). The impact of underutilization is equally as daunting for Latino communities particularly because of their recent (2000) census change as the largest minority population within the U.S.

In addition to revealing the long-term social and economic impact of advanced degree obtainment, there are several other aspects surrounding the problem of under-representation that are equally as important to uncover. In the second half of this chapter a brief review of the existing literature on the Black and Latino experience in higher education is undertaken in order to parse some of the nuances associated with their matriculation through college and graduate school.



## ***LITERATURE REVIEW***

As minority populations continue to grow, more research is emerging that seeks to explore their role and participation within higher education through multiple different lenses and at numerous different stages in the pipeline. Given the complexity of the research surrounding Black and Latino doctoral students and their experiences, I've drawn from a number of different discourses to capture the historical, social, and educational context of this research study. My goal within this portion of the paper is not to survey all of the scholarship on the topic, but rather focus on highlighting multiple perspectives on the Black and Latino experience within higher education as a whole. The perspectives explored include qualitative studies, policy perspectives, contemporary and historical personal narratives. This non-linear approach to address the literature is drawn from Elsa Barkley Brown's (1989) article "African-American Women's Quilting," in which she makes an analogy between pedagogy on the African American experience and African American quilting. African American quilts are not uniform and use several sporadic colors to create a variation of patterns that symbolically represent the non-linear experiences of African American women. Barkley Brown (1989) used this understanding of African American women's lives to create her own non-linear pedagogy to teach her students about these women. In a similar fashion I will use this literature review as a way to weave together multiple, colorful perspectives of Black and Latino higher education that may not all follow a neatly organized path, but that paint a larger picture of their experiences.

*The Journey to the Ph.D.: A Look Back at the College Experience*

In order to understand and develop an appreciation of the literature on the doctoral experience, a review of the literature on the Black and Latino undergraduate experience is needed. Historically the educational pathways for both, African American and Latino populations in the United States have been plagued by discrimination, inequitable resources, achievement gaps, and underdevelopment. Racism in all forms including overt racism, institutionalized racism, and color-blind racism have been at the heart of the problem. Though Black and Latino communities have had their own distinct educational histories, a significant overlap exists in their experiences and struggles. Battles against “separate but equal,” the civil rights movement, and the Chicano student movements are among some of the historical struggles experienced by both groups. For example, “inferior education conditions and the slow response to desegregation mandated in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) united African Americans and Puerto Ricans against the New York City public schools” during the mid twentieth century (MacDonald, 2004, p. 221). Additional struggles were also fought concerning college access. In their article, “From Visibility to Autonomy: Latinos and Higher Education in the U.S., 1965-2005”, MacDonald, Botti, & Hoffman Clark (2007) recount an important history of the Latino experience in higher education. Like other marginalized communities Latino students struggled and fought for equity within the space of higher education.

One example of Latino activism was the Chicano and Puerto Rican youth movements of the 1960s and 1970s, which demanded meaningful access to higher education. These movements also called for curricula that reflected the

changing composition of student populations, faculty members who could serve as role models for aspiring scholars, Hispanic cultural and research centers, and the financial means to realize these goals (MacDonald, Botti, & Hoffman Clark, 2007, p.476).

While college access was an important concern for Black and Latino communities, culturally relevant curriculums, and the overall culture at many PWIs were also critical issues of concern.

In her study of working-class and middle-class Black women during the era of integration, Higginbotham (2001) describes the racial climate during that period and the ways in which the women she studied navigated through the educational pipeline from high school to college. “College administrators did little to anticipate the realities of desegregation. The practice then, as now, was a ‘one-way assimilation process in which black students [were] forced to adapt to white views, norms, and practices” (cited in Higginbotham, 2001, p. 186). While the preparation, expectations, and outcomes of college access differed along class lines for the working-class and middle-class African American women Higginbotham (2001) studied, similar notions of race and racism were expressed across class lines. “Although social class would differentiate many areas of their lives, they were all prepared to struggle against the racism in the society, a racism that they would find expressed in different ways in segregated, integrated, and predominantly white schools” (Higginbotham, 2001, p. 84). The creation of African American based organizations was one way in which some Black students fought against the staunch racism and forced assimilation they encountered on campus. These same struggles

have withstood the test of time as later generations have also fought against conforming to white norms by finding solace in Black or Latino organizations (Johnson, 2003).

Along with confronting assimilation, identity formation within the context of college was and still is another complicated dynamic that students of color in particular confront when they are the minority within a majority. In her chapter “From the Barrio to the Academy: Revelations of a Mexican American Scholarship Girl,” Laura Rendón (2002), explores her journey through the academy and the impact it had on her cultural identity. It was during her first experiences in the academy as a student at a junior college that she began to experience confusion on campus about her role in academia. In addition, she also dealt with great contestation from her family as it pertained to her schooling. When she transferred to a 4-year institution away from home Rendón’s sense of her racial differences became heightened because she was one of only a few minorities at her new institution. “At the University of Houston in 1968, during the thick of racial and social unrest, there was few Mexican American or black students. I met no Mexican American professors, and there was only one black faculty member” (Rendón, 2002, p. 318).

In addition to coping with the scarce presence of minorities, and her academic work, she also struggled to explain her pursuits to her family and stay connected with her culture. “I sensed that deep in my mother’s soul she felt resentful about how this alien culture of higher education was polluting my values and customs. I, in turn, was afraid that I was becoming a stranger to her, a stranger she did not quite understand, a stranger she might not even like” (Rendón, 2002, p. 319). It was that struggle and

balancing act throughout her entire college experiences as a student and professor that led Rendón to critique the structure and culture of American higher education. She challenged the notion that only a certain form of knowledge is accepted in the academy and that diverse student populations must often-times assimilate by denying their past in order to be validated as an academic. Instead she has suggested that the academy needs to do more than just increasing access, they also need to create spaces for these various forms of cultural knowledge to thrive. “My story’s lesson is that it is not only students who must adapt to a new culture but institutions must allow themselves to be changed by foreign cultures” (Rendón, 2002, p. 320). Rendón’s article is particularly useful because she provides a historical perspective on her experiences in the academy and the challenges she dealt with trying to negotiate her ethnic identity and her academic pursuits. In Richard Rodriguez’s (1982) canonical autobiography, *Hunger for Memory*, he also explored his encounters with identity struggles as a student of color within a white institution.

Despite the advances made through integration that allowed more students of color to enter PWIs, many diverse student bodies complete inclusion and affirmation within the academy has still been limited. Furthermore, when race is considered along with gender and class within the college context, even more details about the complex nature of the academic pursuit are exposed. In Vershawn A. Young’s (2007) book, *Your Average Nigga Performing Race Literacy and Masculinity* he explores multiple facets of his racial identity as it pertains to education. One component in particular that he explores is the challenges he encountered trying to create a Black masculine identity within the spaces of the white academy. Like Rendón (2002), he struggled to

create a balance between his blackness and the latent whiteness that defines the academy. In the opening pages of the book Young paints a vivid picture of this complicated struggle by juxtaposing the different racial performances he gives in the Black barbershop and the white academy. Within the barbershop, Young believes that the barbers and other patrons assume that he is gay because of his “literacy habits” (p. XV). As a result, he constantly struggles to prove both his blackness and his sexuality. He likens his experience to that of Shelly Eversley in her book *The Real Negro*: “So in order to get along on the (white) campus and in the barbershop, we must alter not the color of our skin but the ways we perform race in each location. These racial performances are most often carried out through language, the way we communicate” (Young, 2007, p. XIII). In other literature about the doctoral process, speaking the proper language of the academy was a very significant battle that many students of color dealt with in their respective programs (Herrera, 2003; Cushinberry 2005; White 2008). In the opening epigraph, Deborah Gray White (2008) specifically alludes to the challenge when she mentioned that “everyone talked the talk” (p.89). When students of color view the language of the academy as esoteric and inaccessible to them, whether real or perceived, it can sometimes be intimidating and create further alienation and isolation.

“African American Men in the Academy” by Paul Green (2000) is another text that explores race and higher education from the Black male perspective. In the first part of this essay, Green explores the historical ways in which Black males have been socialized to under-achieve and he fleshes out some of the problems in secondary education that have posed impediments in college advancement.. “The

artifacts of social reproduction and the ‘cultural capital’ within poor African American inner-city communities that children bring into schools has substantially diminished the objective chances of academic success and, therein, has inflamed a crisis of social and educational opportunity for African American males” (Green, 2000, p.8). In addition to these factors, several other issues also impact the pipeline according to Green. Among these issues he cites that incarceration rates, social/political/economic isolation, and single-parent homes have all had a serious impact on the educational attainment of African American males. Part of the solution to diminish these detrimental patterns for Black males is mentoring and role models. “Some theorists believe that the academic failure of African American boys is caused in large part by paucity of positive role models, which they need early in their education” (cited in Green, 2000, p. 12). In addition to role models and mentors, Green notes that the academic spaces of HBCUs also prove to be beneficial for African American students because they offer a more supportive climate for these student populations.

In another article that builds upon the differences between HBCUs and PWIs, Fries-Britt & Turner (2002) conducted a qualitative study that explored the differences in the experiences of African American students at both types of institutions. Like Green’s (2000) chapter, they also found that HBCUs were better at providing a strong sense of community among African American students which in turn created a more positive climate. The students at PWIs learned the ability to be “bi-cultural” by assimilating to white culture but still maintaining a sense of their own Black culture (Fries-Britt & Turner, 2002, p. 320). Despite the ability to negotiate

and navigate between two different cultural spaces, Black students at PWIs “identified a number of ways in which they felt the campus worked against them” (Fries-Britt & Turner, 2002, p. 321). The limited social climate for Black students was one of the ways in which students at PWIs felt marginalized. In contrast, students at HBCUs described being very actively engaged in the social culture of the institution. Other examples where the student experiences were “uneven” included support systems, confidence levels, and academic progress. Fries-Britt & Turner (2002) suggest that PWIs need to provide better support and opportunities for African American students because it directly impacts their retention and success. Some of the practical ways in which PWIs can provide better experiences for African American students is through better faculty engagement and by increasing culturally inclusive activities on campus.

Like Green (2000), Castellanos & Jones (2003) evaluate a number of factors impacting the higher education pipeline for Latina/o students in their chapter “Latina/o Undergraduate Experiences in American Higher Education.” Education is the key to increasing the social mobility of the Latino community. However statistics show that many students are severely under-represented in college enrollment and degree conferrals despite their rapid population growth. Even for the students enrolled in two or four year post-secondary institutions, retention is a serious problem because there is a lot of high turn-over. “This phenomenon constitutes a cycle where Latina/o students enter the educational system, drop out, and are subsequently replaced by new Latina/o students. As a result the illusion of a stable set of students is created because the numbers remain constant” (Castellanos & Jones, 2003, p. 3).



The major factors that they cite as influencing retention include, cultural and background variables; socioeconomic status; academic and acculturative stress; family support; campus climate and cultural congruity; and faculty mentorship. In order for institutions to provide better support they must have a thorough understanding of each of these factors. “It is imperative that the individual, environmental/social context, and the role of culture be considered in assessing institutional programs designed to enhance Latina/o student success” (Castellanos & Jones, 2003, p.9). Though their chapter was a brief snapshot of the Latino experience in college, Castellanos & Jones (2003) provided a comprehensive understanding of the history, statistics, and factors that comprise the experiences of many Latino students, particularly those at PWIs.

In the same book, Gloria & Castellanos (2003) explore the combined experiences of both Black and Latino students at majority white institutions by using a PSC (psycho, social cultural) framework. Their goal in using that framework was to address the factors influencing retention. “Although each of the three constructs merits attention individually, a more integrative approach or holistic approach creates a collective and contextualized assessment of ethnic/racial minority student college experiences” (Gloria & Castellanos, 2003, p. 77). In order to use this framework they asked student participants questions about campus climate, cultural congruity and the role of mentors. In their findings they discovered from the students that hostile campus climates and disconnected feelings of belonging were reasons why some students left their institutions. As one African American female student noted, “I lack a sense of belonging here, a feeling of an outsider” (cited in Gloria & Castellanos,

2003, p.78). Students also experienced stereotypes because of both their race/ethnicity and gender. Course offerings, and support systems were also described as impacting the campus climate for Black and Latino students because they felt there were no opportunities specifically for them to be actively involved in the campus. In addition to the campus climate, cultural congruity was another factor that impacted the student experiences. Some Black and Latino students felt a disconnect between the university culture and values and their own. The lack of faculty mentorships and positive role models were also integral factors in their experiences. Like Fries-Britt & Turner (2002), Gloria & Castellanos (2003) recommend that predominantly white universities in particular need to take a proactive role to enhance the experiences of Black and Latino students by being more aware of the needs of their diverse student populations (p.85). They also place accountability on the students as well by encouraging them to take “the responsibility to contribute to their educational experiences” (Gloria & Castellanos, 2003, p.87). This particular chapter was especially insightful not only because the authors took a holistic approach to learn about the experiences of Black and Latino students but also because of the inclusion of student narratives.

The complexity of the college pipeline for Black and Latino students and the historical context of their struggles for access and inclusion have had a profound impact on the composition of doctoral education for these student populations. What happens to the small groups of students who continue on through the pipeline to graduate education? Do their experiences improve? In the next section of this chapter

I will review the literature that specifically explores the experiences of Black and Latino doctoral students.

*Once there, What Happens?: Experiences of Black and Latino Doctoral Students*

Although there is a growing discourse on the history of higher education for African American and Latino students in the U.S., very little literature exists that has examined the historic experiences of Black and Latino doctoral students. In the preface to her book *Too Much to Ask*, Elizabeth Higginbotham (2001) briefly addresses her own subjectivity as a graduate student at a predominantly white institution in 1971. She acknowledged the challenges she felt attending an institution in Boston with a majority white, middle-class, privileged group of students. “Much of my energy that first year was devoted to mastering a new environment and sorting out my own place within it. I was different from my cohort in terms of race, social class, and urban residence” (Higginbotham, 2001, p. ix). Higginbotham’s awareness of her own marginality is what inspired her to pursue research on the experiences of other Black women and their educational experiences.

In a similar fashion Mary Romero (2000) sets the stage for her research on the experiences of women of color in Sociology programs by first briefly acknowledging her own experiences as a Chicana graduate student in the seventies. Besides being one of only two students of color in her department, Romero (2000) also experienced harsh criticism for doing race research, and was negatively labeled as an affirmative action recipient. “Being the only student or the only one of two students of color was difficult, particularly in an environment that attributed my

achievements to affirmative action and where faculty interest was a response to my ethnicity and a need to affirm their liberalism” (Romero, 2000, p. 284). Nearly 10 years after her experiences, Romero (2000) was shocked to learn that similar challenges were still being experienced by Chicana graduate students in Sociology during the late 1980s and early 1990s. As a result, she conducted a study to examine the socialization experiences of women of color and found that hostile and alienating classroom environments, along with a limited curriculum that offered very few diverse courses were among some of the obstacles faced by those student populations.

Similar to Romero (2000), Williams, Brewley, Reed, White, & Davis-Haley (2005) examine the experiences of African American female graduate students in their journal article “Learning to Read Each Other: Black Female Graduate Students Share their Experiences at a White Research I Institution.” The researchers used qualitative research methods and Patricia Hill-Collins’ framework of Black Feminist Thought in order to analyze the “open dialogues among three Black female graduate students and two Black female professors at a southeastern Research I institution” (Williams, Brewley, Reed, White, & Davis-Haley, 2005, p. 184). Among some of the themes expressed in the graduate student narratives were concerns about stereotype threat, community activism, identity, and empowerment. “Optimism fueled my willingness to embark on a terminal graduate degree while at the same time my thoughts were riddled with self-doubt and stereotype threats” (cited in Williams, Brewley, Reed, White, & Davis-Haley, 2005, p. 184). One of the positive ways in which the students were able to express themselves was through group dialogues with the Black female professors. Through their discussions the students and faculty were

able to bond and connect through shared experiences. “By *reading each other* the students did not have to assume the role of victims, instead they took comfort in confiding in each other” (Williams, Brewley, Reed, White, & Davis-Haley, 2005, p. 195). Ultimately this exchange operated as a form of group mentorship. “Mentoring Black graduate students through schooling experiences creates conditions for successful matriculation” (Williams, Brewley, Reed, White, & Davis-Haley, 2005, p. 197). Other themes gathered from the experiences of the Black female graduate students revealed that Affirmative Action and blatant racism were embedded within their experiences. Like Romero’s (2000) experiences, the Black female graduate students within this study expressed concerns about their department’s perceptions of Affirmative Action. In the end the authors make suggestions that more research is needed that specifically addresses Black student perspectives of Affirmative Action; as well as the role of mentorship in their experiences.

“Juggling Intellectuality and Latino Masculinity: The Streets, My Family and School, is a personal narrative of Claudio V. Sanchez’s (2006) experiences navigating the educational pipeline while simultaneously trying to construct a masculine Latino identity. As a child growing up in Mexico without the presence of his father, Sanchez never had an affinity for education, despite the fact that his mother was an English teacher. Upon moving to the U.S. he developed a stronger connection with school, but struggled in junior high and high school to balance his intellectual curiosities with a Latino masculine bravado. “I remember the occasional embarrassment when teachers read grades out loud and I earned 90% or higher. After all, boys in marginalized contexts gain respect for being tough in the streets, not by

being intelligent” (Sanchez, 2006, p. 235). Despite his growing interest in school and the possibility of college, Sanchez was discouraged to attend college because of his immigration status. Ultimately after a few years of working, and with the support of his mother and great faculty members, Sanchez matriculated through college and on to graduate school.

What was most telling in his narrative were the ways in which one’s background and experiences can be transcended and with the proper support can lead to the pathway of a doctoral program. Sanchez’s (2006) essay was also significant because he addressed his challenges trying to balance his masculine identity within the context of graduate school. His resilience, despite the racism of his peers, is evidence that doctoral students of color can successfully navigate the pipeline *in spite of* discrimination, marginalization, and prejudice. What’s also important to note about this narrative is that embedded within his experiences are positive reflections on the role mentorships and faculty support play within graduate experiences for doctoral students of color. “The professors became my surrogate family. I can go into my advisor’s office whenever I need guidance; one of my other professors called my mother and told her that he would ‘look out’ for me” (Sanchez, 2006, p. 238). These forms of relationships have proven to be vital in the doctoral process, especially for students who come from educational environments in which former teachers and guidance counselors discouraged their academic success.

Like Sanchez (2006), Marvin Lynn (2005) also reflected on the role his family background, race, class, and gender played within his experiences as a doctoral student at a West Coast university. Despite growing up in a poor Chicago

neighborhood, Lynn's schooling experiences were characterized by care, support, and motivation. After teaching for a few years, Lynn decided to pursue a Ph.D. program. Upon entrance into the doctoral program he battled antagonism and negative labels because of conservative views about racism in the United States. "As a first-year doctoral student in a graduate school of education known for the work of its 'progressive' scholars, I was less than encouraged when I discovered that I would be expected to develop and practice a politics of dissemblance in order to make it, in what turned out to be an extremely competitive, cut-throat environment" (Lynn, 2005, p. 79). Lynn notes that despite the gains made that have increased the representations of African American in higher education, the culture and climate has not changed. "In some cases, due to the obliteration of Affirmative Action programs and other initiatives aimed at increasing and retaining students from historically under-represented ethnic and racial groups, the campus climate has worsened for many African American students" (cited in Lynn, 2005, p. 81). Ultimately what Lynn concludes is that a hostile culture and climate may have negative effects on the self-esteem of students of color, and that the process can transcend into a form of academic slavery. Though very bold and provocative, Lynn's work is among the first that provides an uncensored narrative of the ways in which assimilation to the white norms of the academy are depriving students of color of their identities, values, and political beliefs.

### ***CONCLUSION AND CHAPTER OVERVIEW***

This research study is momentous because the numbers of doctoral students of color remains disproportionately low despite the implementation of policies and

programs to tackle these issues that have been in place for over 40 years. The results of this study could be significant to numerous stakeholders within and outside of higher education because it adds to the continuum about what we already know regarding these distinct student experiences. It is one of the first qualitative studies to examine the experiences of Black and Latino doctoral students over two different historical time periods. Understanding the evolution of these experiences will serve as a powerful tool to address what diversity has meant and will mean for the future of American culture and society as a whole. This is an important discussion that needs to occur because the racial demographics in the United States are rapidly shifting in favor of minority populations. As a result, now more than ever the system of American higher education needs to hear the voices of historically marginalized communities if it is to successfully welcome them into these spaces and accommodate their needs. Furthermore, this research will also contribute to the construction of new forms of Black and Brown dialogues in education that discuss the overlaps instead of the dichotomies within their histories.

In chapter two I detail my conceptual framework, historical framework, and research design. Chapter two is also the site where each of the study participants is first introduced. Chapter three presents the findings I uncovered in my interviews with the first generation of scholars. In order to comprehend their experiences, their narratives are framed within a social/cultural capital framework. Chapter four complements chapter three by presenting the findings from my interviews with the second generation of doctoral students. Like chapter three, their narratives are presented using a social/cultural capital lens. Chapter five elaborates on the findings



from chapters three and four by providing an analysis of the themes and it concludes with a framework for future implications of this research.

## CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Several factors, including my own personal experiences as a doctoral student of color influenced my thinking and conceptualization of the problem surrounding the under-representation of Black and Latino doctoral students and the forms of social and cultural capital utilized to pursue a doctorate. Each of those factors is embedded within my theoretical and methodological approaches to the topic. In the first half of this chapter I detail my conceptual framework, historical framework, and methodology. In the second half I introduce each of my participants and detail how and why they were recruited for participation.

### ***CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK***

The conceptual framework is “the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supports and informs your research” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 33). In order to develop my basic understanding and interest in the topic I designed a comprehensive framework. According to Maxwell (2005), four important components can be used to build a conceptual framework, “(1) your own experiential knowledge, (2) existing theory and research, (3) your pilot and exploratory research, and (4) thought experiments” (p.37). The first three components each played a significant role in the development of my research design.

### ***Experiential Knowledge***

During my first year of graduate school as a doctoral student I was extremely aware of my presence as a student of color. I was introduced to the idea of pursuing

a Ph.D. as an undergraduate student when I was granted a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF). The MMUF program was designed to increase the number of faculty of color in academia by identifying and preparing undergraduate students of color for doctoral programs. Because of that experience, I developed a strong understanding of the doctoral process and I earned the social/cultural capital I believed was necessary to navigate through the academy. I also acquired a strong peer network of students of color also actively seeking doctorates. It was also during my first year of graduate school that I began informally comparing my experiences with those of my peers at other institutions, and I began to recognize striking similarities in our experiences. I felt like a visitor in someone else's house and I struggled to make myself feel at home that first year. I sensed that I was an anomaly, yet I knew that I had to make a place for myself and create an identity as a "doctoral student" because there was much more at stake than just a degree. For me and my peers we knew that despite the alienation, despite the biased curriculum, or any other challenges we confronted, our roles as doctoral students of color held a larger implication for our communities and society as a whole. I began to love the idea of being an anomaly because I knew that my peers and I were subverting the dominant paradigm of what the academy should look like. Those early conversations with my peers, combined with my own personal experiences led to my initial inquiry into the experiences of doctoral students of color. Reason (1988) considered this process an act of "critical subjectivity"; "a quality of awareness in which we do not suppress our primary experience; nor do we allow ourselves to be swept away and overwhelmed by it; rather we raise it to consciousness and use it as part of the inquiry

process” (1988, p.12, as cited in Maxwell, 2005, p.38). My role as a member of this community of doctoral students of color shaped the questions I began to ask when I first started forming this research topic. Instead of looking for obvious or blatant acts of racism I looked for the subtle nuances in my experiences and those of my peers that I believed distinguished our doctoral process. As my interest grew, I began complicating my growing understanding of the topic by raising questions around age, class, and gender as well. In order to delve further into the topic I decided to examine the existing theory and literature on Black and Latino doctoral students.

### Existing theory and research

The use of existing theory and research is a vital component of the research process because it can provide the context for an area of interest and give direction in establishing a solid research topic and questions.

First it can help you to develop a *justification* for your study—to show how your work will address an important need or unanswered question...Second, prior research can inform your decisions about methods, suggesting alternative approaches or revealing potential problems and their solutions...Third, prior research can be a source of data that can be used to test or modify your theories...Finally prior research can help you generate theory (Maxwell, 2005, p. 55-56).

Although the existing research on Black and Latino doctoral students was limited, the information gathered was beneficial because it allowed me to develop a list of emerging themes and patterns that characterized the experiences of those student populations. My literature review revealed several themes including: mentorships;

equitable distribution of financial resources; race research stigmatized/ghettoized (Romero, 2003); limited race/gender curriculum (Gabbin, 1992; Romero, 2003); assimilation to white standards of education/pedagogy (Cleveland, 2004; Herrera, 2003); campus climate (Cleveland, 2004; Bonner & Evans, 2004); self-doubt/serendipity/affirmative action student (Herrera 2003, Romero 2003); less-support of research interests (Fries-Britt & Turner, 2005); academic integration/social integration/esoteric language and humor (Bonner & Evans, 2004; Herrera, 2003 ); stereotype threat (Milner, 2004); identity development/struggles (Herrera, 2003; Bonner & Evans, 2004); under-representation of minority faculty and students (Higginbotham, 2001); obscure graduate school culture/application process (Yosso, 2006); classroom power dynamics (Romero, 2003); junior faculty and doctoral student partnerships (Fries-Britt & Turner, 2005; Tillman, 2005). From the themes that emerged I was able to broaden my understanding of the Black and Latino experience in graduate school and establish a concrete framework to identify similarities between the literature and their quotidian realities.

The existing literature and theory was also important because it shaped the construction of my methodology and research questions. A significant portion of the prior research was personal narratives and anecdotes, foundation reports, or quantitative studies emphasizing growth and retention rates. Personal narratives were useful at uncovering the doctoral experience from individual perspectives, but they were not as objective and lacked formal analysis. There were very few formal qualitative research studies on the experiences of Blacks or Latinos and none that compared their experiences. As a result, I began shaping and forming research

questions that were directly tied to the gaps that I saw in the literature and the methods. One key omission in the literature was “context”. Establishing the historical and socio-political context of the experiences of these student populations became an important mission of my research because it could be used to interpret their viewpoints and also explain the culture and climate of their respective institutions.

In addition to exploring the existing literature and theory, early on I also conducted an informal pilot study on the experiences of young, successful Black and Latino doctoral students in order to gather preliminary research for a conference presentation at the *Harvard Graduate School of Education Student Research Conference and International Forum* in February 2006.

### Pilot Studies

Pilot studies hold an important value in all research because they allow a researcher to test their preliminary assumptions of a topic. “Pilot studies serve some of the same functions as prior research, but they can be focused more precisely on your own concerns and theories. You can design pilot studies specifically to test your ideas or methods and explore their implications or to inductively develop *grounded theory*” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 56). Conducting a pilot study was especially important for my research because I was a member of the community that I wanted to study and I needed to really identify what elements of the experiences for doctoral students of color I was missing because of my own pre-conceived notions and personal bias.

For my pilot study, conducted in January 2006, I recruited four participants (three females and one male) each from different institutions in the Northeast, Midwest, Southeast, and Mid-Atlantic. One semi-structured interview session was held with each participant about their doctoral experiences. Participants were asked a

series of questions ranging from topics about the racial climate of their departments, the number of students of color within their department, strategies they used to navigate through the process, changes they would recommend to their departments, mentorships, age, obstacles in their program, etc. From my preliminary findings I discovered that peer networks, and informal mentorships, with other students, staff, or faculty of color were extremely important for my participants. One reason why those networks were important was in part because they could easily confide in one another about common racial experiences.

Another important finding that I discovered during my first pilot study was that age did not play as significant a role in the experiences of those students that matriculated to graduate school immediately after completing their baccalaureate degree as I had previously assumed. “One important use that pilot studies have in qualitative research is to develop an understanding of the concepts and theories held by the people you are studying –what is often called ‘interpretation’” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 58). For the participants in my pilot study they interpreted age as the least significant factor in their experiences over race and gender. Interpretations were also important in exposing the contradictions between participants’ conceptualization of race, class, and gender versus their actual lived experiences.

Based on the existing literature, my experiential knowledge, and pilot studies, I developed a theoretical framework that best suited my interrogation of the experiences of Black and Latino Doctoral students.

## ***THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK***

This study uses Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Latino/a Critical Race Theory (LatCRT) as its theoretical paradigm to guide the inquiry of student experiences because it allows the subtle nuances of each participant's experiences to emerge through narratives. The basic tenants of CRT are that: racism is ordinary not aberrational; race and races are social constructions; racism is based on interest convergence and material determinism; there is differential racialization; and there are unique voices of color who are the only ones competent to speak on racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 79). The overarching theme of CRT is that racism is still quite pervasive and is manifested through various agencies and institutions. "CRT is a framework that can be used to theorize, examine and challenge the ways race and racism implicitly and explicitly impact on structures, practices, and discourses" (Yosso, 2005, p. 70). "Counter-stories" are an essential element of the CRT framework because they provide a space for marginalized communities to create a voice for their perspectives. "These stories increase the understanding of the interpenetrations among the identities associated with race, color, gender, class, sexual orientation, nationality, disability...Such narratives invoke the right of the subordinated person to narrate—to interpret events in opposition to the dominant narratives (Montoya, 2002, p. 245). Critical race theory is useful because it can function both as a theory *and* a methodology. Developing "counter-stories" as a method helped me to construct an oppositional lens to view and understand the complexities of historically marginalized identities and how their experiences have evolved within predominantly white institutions.



Built from the school of Critical Race Theory, Latino/a Critical Race theory brought new features to CRT in order to extend the dialogue beyond the Black and White binary. “Latina/o critical race (LatCrit) theory scholarship in particular brought Chicano/a, Latina/o consciousness to CRT in examining racialized layers of subordination based on immigration status, sexuality, culture, language, phenotype, accent, and surname. (Yosso, 2006, p.6-7). By broadening the boundaries of CRT to be more inclusive of multiple racialized experiences, LatCRT has helped to provide a stronger foundation for counter-stories to develop. It was particularly useful in interpreting the experiences of my Latino participants, each from Mexican American backgrounds.

CRT and LatCRT were also useful models to understand the role of education and educational institutions on the experiences of Black and Latino students. “For the field of education Daniel Solórzano (1997, 1998) identified five tenets of CRT that can and should inform theory, research pedagogy, curriculum and policy: (1) The intercentricity of race and racism; (2) the challenge to dominant ideology; (3) the commitment to social justice; (4) the centrality of experiential knowledge; and (5) the utilization of interdisciplinary approaches” (cited in Yosso, 2005, p.73). The two tenets outlined by Solórzano (1997, 1998) that were omnipresent throughout this study were those that focused on experiential knowledge and interdisciplinary approaches. CRT validates the experiences of people of color by allowing multiple forms of experiential knowledge to form and be utilized within research and pedagogy. Plus “CRT goes beyond disciplinary boundaries to analyze race and racism within both historical and contemporary contexts” (cited in Yosso, 2005,

p.74). By using CRT and LatCRT to compare the experiences of both first generation and second generation doctoral students of color, I was able to assess what patterns of continuity and change were evident.

In addition to CRT and LatCRT, social and cultural capital were also important theoretical paradigms I used as the foundation of my conceptual framework in order to comprehend the experiences of my subjects. Well-known scholars such as Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, and Robert Putnam are most known for their definitions of social and cultural capital. Pierre Bourdieu (1992) defines social capital as “the sum of resources, actual or virtual that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition (cited in Halpern, 2005, p.7).” James Coleman’s (1988) definition outlines the characteristics of social capital. “Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors—whether persons or corporate actors—within that structure” (cited in Halpern, 2005, p.7). Robert Putnam (1995) defines social capital as “features of social life—networks, norms, and trust—that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives” (cited in Halpern, 2005, p. 1).” Simply stated social capital is the benefits that derive from various formal or informal networks among individuals and or groups. Within different *fields*<sup>2</sup> or contexts social capital can take on different meanings. However each of their models are heavily criticized for ignoring the ways in which race, class,

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<sup>2</sup> Field is “defined as a structured space with its own laws of functioning and its own relations of force independent of those of politics and the economy” (Bourdieu, 1993, p.6).

and gender impact the formation of different types of capital (Orr, 1999; Yosso, 2005).

CRT broadens those traditional characterizations by challenging the white norms that have defined social and cultural capital in favor of a more inclusive model. “A traditional view of cultural capital is narrowly defined by White, middle class values, and is more limited than wealth—one’s wealth accumulated assets and resources. CRT expands this view. Centering the research lens on the experiences of People of Color in critical historical context reveals accumulated assets and resources in the histories and lives of Communities of Color (Yosso, 2005, p. 77). Each of those accumulated assets is generated through various forms of capital and over time each of those forms of capital build and sustain what Yosso (2005) calls “community cultural wealth.” “Community cultural wealth is an array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed and utilized by Communities of Color to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression” (Yosso, 2005, p.77). In her article, “Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth,” Tara Yosso (2005) draws from the research of numerous CRT scholars to identify six vital forms of capital that comprise the wealth framework. Those forms are:

“(1) Aspirational capital refers to the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers;...

(2)Linguistic capital includes the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or

style;...(3) Familial capital refers to those cultural knowledges nurtured

among familia (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition;(4) Social capital can be understood as a networks of people and community resources. These peer and other social contacts can provide both instrumental and emotional support to navigate through society's institutions, (5) Navigational capital refers to skills of maneuvering through social institutions; (6) Resistant capital refers to those knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality. (Cited in Yosso, 2005, p. 77-80).

This framework of CRT and capital was particularly useful when studying members of marginalized groups because it allowed me as the researcher to identify, acknowledge, and define the nuances that comprised the narratives of each generation of Black and Latino scholars.

## ***HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK***

### ***Brief Historical Overview of Black and Latino Movements in the U.S.***

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, several political and social movements were launched by Black and Latino communities to obliterate historical systems of oppression and discrimination that created adverse and unequal economic, social, and educational conditions for those groups. Social movements are distinct structures because they include the following implicit components:

“Identity (definition of the protest group); opposition (a challenge to the repression of certain ideas or interests); and integrity (actions based on universal values and universal realities). Social movements...influence the course of historical development taking a leading role in social change. They

perform several functions: they mediate between individuals and structures or social realities; they serve to clarify collective beliefs; and lastly they exert pressure on public authorities and elites in power” (cited in Stevens-Arroyo, 2004, p. 322).

After the abolishment of slavery in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, African Americans in the United States were still not given the just liberties they were due, but instead were subject to Jim Crow laws that further demoralized them and prohibited their full inclusion in American society.

Through the first three decades of the twentieth century, the mechanisms that circumscribed black lives remained in place. Individual blacks made breakthroughs into the middle class; the New Deal, grassroots protests, and the stirrings in organized labor in the 1930s, culminating in the March on Washington movement in 1941, encouraged a politics of hope and raised the stakes in the struggle for economic justice. But most black southerners still lived out their lives in a rigidly segregated and repressive world (Litwack, 2009, p.4).

However, it was the post WWII era that really saw major sparks of change and the creation of mass movements. Some of the key movements initiated among African Americans included: Black freedom movements, the civil rights movement, and the Black power movement. Each of those movements had a major impact on the social and political needs of the Black community.

Capitalizing on the gains made earlier, in the 1930s, 1940s, and early 1950s, the civil rights movement revolutionized black consciousness

and mobilized the black community in ways that captured the imagination of much of the world. Extraordinary changes—some of them symbolic, some of them substantive—transformed the South. The civil rights movement struck down the legal barriers of segregation and disenfranchisement, dismantling a racial caste system that had been evolving, sometimes fitfully, over some four centuries (Litwack, 2009, p. 6). Simultaneously while those movements were mobilizing the Black community other movements were being launched by different Latino communities as well.

Among Latino communities, Mexican Americans in particular, several battles for equality were waged after the U.S-Mexican war and the creation of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hildalgo of 1848. Several key organizations were formed from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century on through the 1960s and 1970s including: mutual aid societies (mutualistas) 1930s; the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) 1929; Community Service Organization (CSO) 1948; the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA) 1959; United Farm-workers Union 1960s; Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO) 1960s; and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) 1967 were each among some of the organizations that actively resisted white regimes of power, and advocated for the social and political rights of Mexican Americans (Hero, 1992; and Gonzalez 2000; MacDonald, 2004). It was however the Chicano Movement of the 1960s that created a mass collective of various groups that brought about the most significant change.

“This movement encompassed several groups and a variety of ideas. The groups ranged from paramilitary organizations focused on the barrios to

student groups actively involved on campuses and in campus communities to a political party, La Raza Unida (United Race, or United People/Culture party). Despite the various concerns, there was a consensus among the groups that the social and political system had both ignored and discriminated against the Mexican American population, which had not been treated with proper respect (Hero, 1992, p. 37).

For this research the movements and initiatives among Black and Latino communities that were the most germane to the construction of this project were those that focused on education, particularly postsecondary education.

Struggles for inclusion and equity within higher education have been among many of the historic educational battles fought by African American and Latino students. A critical goal of this research was to dissect those battles and explore not only how eventual inclusion at PWIs impacted Black and Latino students, but also how their presence in turn impacted those institutions over time. Affirmative Action was in many ways a response to many of the earlier movements for equality, including those for equal access to education, initiated by Black and Latino communities. “The combined sum of those black movements (including both black nationalism and integrationism) against white privilege produced the compromise with the status quo known today as affirmative action” (Rubio, 2001, p. 137). I used the era of Affirmative Action from 1967-present as the backdrop to define the historical landscape for the two generations of scholars that I studied because of the impact it has made within higher education. “According to one study, the percentage of blacks enrolled in Ivy League colleges rose from 2.3 in 1967 to 6.3 in 1976, while

the percentages in other ‘prestigious’ colleges grew from 1.7 to 4.8” (cited in Bowen & Bok, 1998, p. 7). Affirmative Action was also pivotal at creating a larger middle class, particularly among the African American community. “The 1964 Civil Rights Act and presidential Executive Order 11246 constituted the foundation of a new black middle class, just as the Civil Rights Act of 1866 had set the stage for the first” (Bowser, 2007, p.101). The creation of a larger Black middle class was important because it helped to establish more financial capital among African Americans. “It was through Affirmative Action that a new generation of working-class African Americans gained admissions to the same schools as whites, was hired for the same jobs as whites, and was able to rent and buy homes in formerly white communities” (Bowser, 2007, p. 9). The same could also be true for other minority communities as well. “Affirmative Action brought blacks and other minorities into unions, the civil service, colleges and universities, and private sector jobs, thus partly correcting inequities from historic racial repressions in the United States” (Bowser, 2007, p. 9).

Although there has been substantial growth since the late 1960s in the number of Black and Latino students admitted to PWIs, there has also been substantial opposition to the programs and initiatives created by Affirmative Action. In order to capture this divide I’ve defined the two different eras from which participants were recruited as “Affirmative Action Implementation” and “Affirmative Action Dismemberment.” Although the historical framework primarily draws upon Affirmative Action, several other important policies, laws, and events have also had a significant impact on the state of higher education including the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Higher Education Act of 1965.



### Affirmative Action Implementation

The racially discriminatory mandates and laws that were a part of the fabric of United States history had a powerful and looming impact on Black and Latino access to higher education. “It was not until the latter half of the twentieth century that African Americans and members of other minority groups were able to attend white colleges and universities in significant numbers” ( Beckman, 2006, p.14). Prior to that point, many African Americans had access to college education through HBCUs. However, in many instances in order to acquire advanced degrees they had to go to northern white universities or to European universities (Anderson, 2002, p. 7). Although *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 opened the door for people of color to integrate elementary and secondary schools, increases in the representation of Black and Latino students within higher education were due in large part to the legislation created by Lyndon Johnson in 1965 known as “Affirmative Action.” “Affirmative Action was born with the implementation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and then shaped by the passage of Executive Order 11246 (pertaining to discrimination by contractors), Executive Order 11375 (which included sex as a protected class), judicial decisions, and the passage of state laws” (Garcia, 1997, p.3). Though well intentioned to reduce racial inequities, the parameters of Affirmative Action were not well defined during the first decade and one- half of its enactment. Institutions of higher education in particular developed several distinctive voluntary admissions and scholarship policies they believed were in accordance with the mission of Affirmative Action. Often times those strategies meant creating quotas to ensure a guaranteed amount of Black or

Latino students during the late 1960s and early 1970s. “Many colleges and universities began to experiment with the idea of achieving racial equality by giving temporary preferences to minority students” (Beckman, 2006, p. 15). Some of those preferences took shape in the form of mandatory space allotments for a minimum number of minority applicants. However, those preferences did not last long.

During the 1970s opposition to Affirmative Action grew and it became evident in the number of state and federal court cases that emerged challenging the policy. *DeFunnis v. Odegaard* (1973), *Flannagan v. Georgetown* (1976), and *Alevy v. Downstate Medical Center* (1976) (Welch & Gruhl, 1998) each questioned the constitutionality of Affirmative Action initiatives implemented in higher education. However neither of those cases was as prominent as the landmark U.S. Supreme Court challenge *Regents of the University of California vs. Bakke* (1978). After being rejected twice for admission to the University of California-Davis Medical School, Andrew Bakke, a Jewish American applicant, argued that racial preferences in admissions were unconstitutional. The Bakke case was pivotal in the redevelopment of Affirmative Action because the final ruling by the United States Supreme Court stated that racial quotas were indeed unconstitutional. “The Court decided the case by a narrow five to four vote, holding that the use of restrictive racial quotas was impermissible under the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment” (Beckman, 2006, p.17). Although they rejected racial quotas there was a split decision among the justices about whether race should ever be a factor considered in admissions. Ultimately they concluded that race could be considered in certain contexts to right prior historic wrongs of racial discrimination and to ensure diversity.

The large national spotlight that the *Bakke* (1978) decision drew to race-sensitive admissions policies played a heavy role in re-defining Affirmative Action. Because of its impact I recruited participants that *started* graduate school prior to 1978. Identified from here on as “first generation” scholars, these students had a unique vantage point as the pilot-recipients of Affirmative Action before it was brought under national scrutiny. They were also among the first set of Black and Latino scholars to benefit from new diversity plans and as a result they were able to pursue doctorates at PWIs in larger numbers than in the past. Furthermore, private foundations such as Rockefeller and Ford Foundations created minority doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships, faculty support, and research centers to grease the educational pipeline and create a “talented tenth” among this generation of scholars (MacDonald, Botti, & Hoffman Clark, 2007). Prior to 1967 there were some Black and Latino scholars that pursued and earned doctorates and other advanced degrees. “By the mid-1940s there were approximately 3,000 African Americans holding master’s degrees and more than 550 with Ph.D.s” (Anderson, 2002, p.6). While the figures for Latinos earning advanced degrees prior to the late 1960s is limited, “the 1920s-1950s...witnessed the entrance of Latino faculty into higher education...key role models and intellectuals who trained the leaders of the Chicano generation include George I. Sánchez” (MacDonald, 2004, p. 122). However, the onset of Affirmative Action ushered in a new wave of additional opportunities for these historically marginalized communities to potentially achieve at new levels.

At the state level, a number of programs evolved in the area of higher education intended to increase minority presence on campus. In February

1967, representatives of the New York Board of Education...39 metropolitan-area colleges and universities met to plan a program, partially supported by foundation money, to help needy black and Puerto Rican students gain access to college by providing individualized instruction, small classes, and a guarantee of college admission with adequate performance...Other states and institutions developed similar programs...Mary Washington College instituted a minority scholarship fund. Florida State University funded programs to recruit and retain minority students (Howard, 1997, p. 30-31).

Because this was a period of great change and integration, these “first generation” scholars of color were trail-blazers that changed the face and state of the academy. They laid the foundation for the “second generation” to come in to those predominantly white spaces with greater ease by establishing the social and cultural capital necessary to enter doctoral education as a minority within a majority space.

#### *Affirmative Action Dismemberment*

Despite the controversial ruling in *Bakke* (1978) that eliminated the use of racial quotas, in the decades following the Supreme Court decision many more institutions began implementing Affirmative Action programs. “Thus in the two decades subsequent to the Bakke Decision, race-conscious affirmative action was employed by a majority of the institutions of higher learning, and implemented to one degree or another by most elite universities and colleges in the country” (Beckman, 2006, p. 19). As a result, the value and significance of diversity increased and became an important element that many institutions sought to enrich their student bodies. “A sizeable and influential segment of higher education...maintained

vigorously that Justice Powell was correct in stating that diversity is a compelling educational interest worthy of being promoted to enhance the educational experience for all, and not only to address past wrongs and prior institutional discriminations” (Cited in Beckman, 2006, p. 19). With many institutions firmly holding that belief, numerous programs and opportunities from the public and private sector were created to increase minority enrollment and participation in higher education. Some of those programs had a particular mission in mind to increase minority enrollment in graduate education.

The Ronald E. McNair program and the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship were two different programs that derived from such initiatives. The McNair Scholars program was launched in 1989 as a United States government program to “increase the number of low-income and minority undergraduates who pursue degrees at the doctoral level” (Curry, 1999, p.62.) Similarly the Andrew Mellon Foundation, a private non-profit philanthropic organization, created the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship program in 1988 with the same objective of “reducing over time the serious under-representation on the faculties of individuals from certain minority groups, as well as to address the attendant educational consequences of these disparities” (Mellon Foundation, 2003). Although both programs were effective at pushing for more diversity within the academy, the means by which these and other programs improved institutional diversity through exclusive recruitment was still sharply criticized. “Despite widespread recognition of the value of diversity, efforts to increase the number of minority professionals through race-

sensitive admissions policies have never been fully accepted (Bowen & Bok, 2000, p. 13).

Some of these race-based policies and programs were even rejected by other minority applicants. In *Podberesky v. University of Maryland, College Park* (1994) a male Latino student sued the University for being denied a scholarship designated only for African American students. “In a 1994 ruling, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit handed Podberesky and his lawyers a huge victory by declaring the scholarship program’s race restrictions illegal” (Schmidt, 2007, p.119). In the aftermath that followed the ruling, several other public universities broadened the requirements to be all inclusive for some of their scholarship programs originally designated for African Americans. By the late 1990s continued opposition to Affirmative Action grew. “From 1995 to 2003, the use of race-conscious affirmative action in higher education came under intense criticism and attack in the federal court system as well as at the state level in California, Texas, Washington, and Florida” (Beckman, 2006, p.20).

*Hopwood vs. Texas* (1996) was a monumental case, like *Bakke* (1978) that in part shifted the tide in Affirmative Action. “The U.S. Fifth Circuit of Appeals held that the University of Texas, School of Law discriminated against four white students because of their race in the admissions process at the Law School” (Kaufmann & Gonzalez, 1997, p.227.) The court’s decision opened the door for additional challenges to other comparable programs. “The Hopwood decision... ‘officially ended affirmative action in higher education in the state of Texas, but in a broader sense the decision highlighted the trend of dismantling affirmative action plans as inappropriate

remedies for the nation's past injustices'" (cited in Beckman, 2006, p. 21).

Simultaneously while *Hopwood* was being decided in Texas, the state of California implemented a race neutral admissions policy, known as Proposition 209.

The Regents of the University of California issued a ruling of their own, announcing that the nine universities in the state system would no longer be permitted to take race into account in admitting students. This policy was subsequently affirmed by the voters of California in a statewide referendum (Bowen & Bok, 1998, p. 14).

Shortly after Proposition 209 and the *Hopwood* decision the state of Texas implemented a "ten percent plan" to address drastic decreases in minority enrollment at Texas institutions.

Texas was scrambling to find ways to offset the effects of the Fifth Circuit courts'...decision, which was causing black and Hispanic enrollments to plunge. None of the new admissions policies adopted in California were as groundbreaking in how they redefined merit as the Ten Percent Plan passed by the Texas legislature in 1997 (Schmidt, 2007, p. 146).

The plan adopted in Texas offered automatic admission to any state school for those students that graduated in the top ten percent of their graduating high school class.

"Under the plan developed in the state senate...Texas high school students who graduated in the top 10% of their class were guaranteed a spot at the state public university of their choosing, including highly selective University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M University" (Douglass, 2007, p. 200). California and Florida followed suit and also implemented "ten percent plans." "Percentage plans attempted

to evaluate student academic performance within the context of their local school—a recognition that the quality of schools and the environment they offer for student learning vary” (Douglass, 2007, p. 201). After the battles of the 1990s, the war against affirmative action continued on into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Of the cases against Affirmative Action brought to court during the 21<sup>st</sup> century *Gratz*, *Hamacher*, and *Grutter v. The Regents of the University of Michigan* (2003) was the most prominent particularly because of the split decisions issued by the United States Supreme court.

In 2003 two very monumental cases challenging race-based admissions policies at the University of Michigan were brought before the U.S Supreme Court. In *Gratz v. Bollinger* (2003), Jennifer Gratz and Patrick Hamacher challenged the point system used by the University of Michigan that awarded additional points to minority applicants. “By a 6 to 3 in *Gratz*, the Court found unconstitutional the undergraduate admission policy at the University of Michigan, primarily on the grounds that the practice of awarding a fixed number of points in the freshman admissions process to every member of a racial or ethnic group was de facto quota and therefore illegal” (Laird, 2005, p.24). The court’s decision in *Gratz* (2003) was a stinging defeat for advocates of Affirmative Action.

However, shortly thereafter the highest court issued another monumental decision in the case *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) that almost entirely conflicted with their earlier actions in *Gratz* (2003). Barbara Grutter, a rejected applicant to the University of Michigan Law School, sued the University because she believed that she was wrongly denied admission on the basis of her race in favor of other minority



applicants with lower grades and scores. Unlike the undergraduate admission policy though, the law school policies for admission did not use a point system.

By a 5 to 4 in *Grutter*...the court found that the consideration of race and ethnicity by the University of Michigan Law School was a compelling interest of the university and was permissible because the Law School conducted an individual review of each applicant and considered race or ethnicity among a range of other qualities and factors in making its admissions decisions (Laird, 2005, p. 24).

Although that case was a victory for Affirmative Action, it still left many institutions bewildered and uncertain of their admissions policies. According to a report by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation the aftermath of cases like *Hopwood* (1996) and *Gratz* (2003), and *Grutter* (2003) is having a significant impact within graduate education and the doctoral process in particular. “Despite extraordinary support within and beyond academia for affirmative action admissions programs—as evidenced by the University of Michigan case—court challenges have had a significant chilling effect, resulting in a dilution of resources and a weakening of institutional will” (WWNFF, 2005, p.3). Not surprisingly the Foundation found that despite marginal increases in the numbers of Black and Latino doctoral students and recipients, diversity in doctoral education continues to have a very poor record (WWNFF, 2005, p. 3). The waning commitment to institutional diversity was an important factor in the recruitment of my second set of study participants.

I recruited students currently pursuing doctorates as my “second generation” of Black and Latino scholars because of the rapidly changing notion and commitment

to diversity in higher education. As in the case of *Podberesky v. University of Maryland, College Park* (1994) changing commitments to diversity have impacted not only admissions but also scholarship and fellowship programs designated for minority students as well.

At least in name, minority programs are rapidly disappearing from college campuses. Colleges are dropping ‘minority’ from the titles of scholarships and fellowships—as well as recruitment, orientation, and academic enrichment programs—and opening them to populations previously excluded (Schmidt, 2004, para. 3)

For example, the Mellon Minority Undergraduate Fellowship program mentioned earlier underwent a name change to its program, now known as the Mellon *Mays* Undergraduate Fellowship, in 2003 to accommodate a broader applicant pool.

“Changing its name in 2003 to the Mellon *Mays* Undergraduate Fellowship Program, and rededicating its mission to serving underrepresented students *and* students who have a demonstrated commitment to eradicating racial disparities” (Rose, 2007, p. 1).

The change in name to *Mays* was done to serve as a symbolic reference to the historical legacy of Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, former president of Morehouse College, and his efforts to fight against segregation and education.

As a result of such changes, doctoral students of color today are participating within higher education at a point in time where institutions and programs alike are concerned about the possible consequences of considering race in their admissions or fellowship programs. Because of these changes, it is important to understand on a micro level what the experiences have been like for these populations currently

operating in higher education when diversity measures implemented over the past 40 years are increasingly being rolled back. Comparing the experiences of first and second generation Black and Latino scholars creates a lens to understand the range of transformation and/or persistence of key factors over time.

### ***RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND DESIGN***

My primary research questions for investigation are:

1. How are the experiences of current (2003-2008) second generation Black and Latino doctoral students at predominantly white institutions similar or different to those of first generation Black and Latino scholars that pursued doctorates during the 1960s-1970s? What forms of social and cultural capital are utilized in their experiences and how do they compare over time?
  - a. How are race, ethnicity, and class experienced by Black and Latino Doctoral students at PWIs then and now?
2. How is the current culture and climate of doctoral education at PWIs similar or different to the culture and climate of the late 1960s-1970s?

### ***Research Design***

The purpose of my research project and the nature of my research questions required an in-depth student perspective in order to understand the experiences of first generation and second generation Black and Latino doctoral students. In order to achieve this level of understanding I used qualitative research methods. According to Merriam (1998):

The key philosophical assumption...upon which all types of qualitative research

are based is the view that reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world (p. 6).

My research study examined the ways in which Black and Latino doctoral students constructed and defined their experiences at PWIs and what forms of social and cultural capital emerged throughout their journeys. Within qualitative research there are several philosophical traditions or methodologies that can be employed to address a research problem. The challenge however is selecting the appropriate tradition to address the research questions adequately.

Initially when I began my research proposal I identified phenomenology as the philosophical tradition to frame my methodology. Instead however, I decided to do a “basic or generic qualitative study” (Merriam, 1998, p. 11). Although I opted not to use phenomenological tools in the construction of my study, phenomenology still underlies my research. “Qualitative research draws from the philosophy of phenomenology in its emphasis on experience and interpretation” (Merriam, 1998, p.15). A basic qualitative study employs qualitative methods but does not have the same emphasis on intuition or developing an “essence” of each experience as it does in phenomenology.

Researchers who conduct these studies...simply seek to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, or the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved...Data are collected through interviews, observations, or document analysis. Findings are a mix of description and analysis—an

analysis that uses concepts from the theoretical framework of study...In these studies the analysis does not extend to building a substantive theory as it does in grounded theory studies. Neither are these case studies; there is no bounded system or functioning unit that circumscribes the investigation (Merriam, 1998, p. 11).

As mentioned earlier, the key goal of this research was to understand the experiences of two different historically marginalized communities by using their own voices and perspectives. Learning more about how their experiences compared over time revealed a great deal about American society and how certain minority populations occupy and navigate through majority spaces. Comparative research was especially beneficial for this research because it allowed multiple circumstances to emerge that further augmented my understanding of the phenomenon. “The more cases included in a study and the greater the variation across the cases, the more compelling an interpretation is likely to be” (Merriam, 1998, p. 40).

### Sampling Strategies

I employed “purposeful sampling” as my initial sampling strategy. Purposeful sampling is “sampling for *information-rich* cases that hold the greatest potential for generating insight about the phenomenon of interest” (Jones, Torres & Arminio, 2006, p.66). Patton (2002) defines *information rich cases* as “those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry” (p.230). Within purposeful sampling there are a number of strategies that can be employed. For purposes of my research study I used criterion sampling. “The logic

of criterion sampling is to review and study all cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance, a strategy common in quality assurance efforts” (Patton, 2002, p. 238). Initially when I designed my study I established the following four important criterions for my sample selections:

1. Black or Latino
2. Arts/Humanities doctoral program
3. Predominantly White Institution in the Mid-Atlantic region of the U.S.
4. Former (first enrolled from 1965-1977)/Current (2007-present)

However, once I was in the field I modified two of my criterions to aid in my recruitment efforts. My initial goal was to select participants from only one discipline, Arts/Humanities, because there were more similarities in the program requirements to obtain the doctorate. However, I included three social science students among my participants. I also modified the regions from where I drew participants to include the North East, Northwest, Southeast, and Mid-Atlantic. This was done primarily because tremendous difficulty was encountered recruiting first-generation participants that earned their doctorates within only the Mid-Atlantic. I also added participation in a pre-doctoral prep program (such as McNair, or Mellon) as a criterion for my current participants so that I could understand the role those programs have served in the experiences of Black and Latino students.

The participant focus was on Black and Latino doctoral student populations because they represent the two largest minority populations within the United States but are also the most disproportionately under-represented in doctoral education given

their population size<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore very little research has been conducted that has compared their educational experiences in higher education. Their educational histories provided a richer analysis to understand variances in experiences across different marginalized communities as noted by CRT and LatCRT.

Because the goal of my research was to examine the experiences of these students at PWIs, I selected participants who are or were enrolled at these types of institutions. Selecting participants from PWIs was also significant because the vast majority of current Black and Latino students are enrolling to earn doctorates at these types of institutions. According to the American Council of Education (ACE), of the 2, 727 doctoral degrees awarded to African Americans during the 2003-04 school year, only 257 were conferred at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (Cook & Cordova, p. 60, tables 18-19). As well, of the 1,558 total doctorates awarded to Latino students, only 165 were conferred at Hispanic Serving Institutions (Cook & Cordova, p.60, tables 18-19).

In order to find some of the information-rich samples that fit my outlined criteria snowball sampling was used. This is a tactic in which you “identify cases of interest from sampling people who know people who know people who know what cases are information rich, that is, good examples for study, good interview participants” (Patton, 2002, p. 243). After receiving Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from the University of Maryland, College Park, (**Appendix A**) I began the process of recruitment through the use of snowball sampling during the summer of

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<sup>3</sup> Native Americans account for only 192 of all doctoral degrees awarded during the 2002-2003 school year (NCES, 2002-2003, table. 7.5). However, according to the 2000 U.S. Census, Native Americans only made up 0.9 % of the U.S. population. Given their population size in relation to the number of doctorates earned, they are not as disproportionately represented in doctoral programs given their small population.

2007. I also recruited participants when I participated at the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship/Social Science Research Council graduate conference in June of 2007. Additional participants were selected through “Study Participants Needed” Flyers (**Appendix B**) placed on the academic social-networking site, Facebook.

In addition to sampling strategies, *sample size* was also an important factor within my research design. In order to address the appropriate sample size for my research study I had to establish the scope of my project and whether to choose breadth versus depth. “The extent to which a research or evaluation study is broad or narrow depends on purpose, the resources available, the time available and the interest of those involved” (Patton, 2002, p. 228). Depth was chosen over breadth because the purpose of my research was to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of Black and Latino doctoral students over time in order to better address the phenomenon of under-representation. Even though there are no restrictions regarding sample size according to Patton (2002), he did recommend specifying “*minimum samples* based on expected reasonable coverage of the phenomenon given the purpose of the study and stakeholder interest” (p. 246). My minimum sample size was eight because that figure reflects every possible perspective along race, gender, and program status that I outlined as a part of my criteria. More specifically the breakdown is as follows:

- 2 second generation African American doctoral students (1 male, 1 female)
- 2 second generation Latino/a doctoral students (1 male, 1 female)



- 2 first generation African American doctoral students (1 male, 1 female)
- 2 first generation Latino doctoral students (1 male, 1 female)

Once each participant was recruited they were given a Study Outline (**Appendix C**) detailing the scope of the project. Additionally, they were each required to complete a Consent Form (**Appendix D**) before participating in the study. To maintain participant confidentiality, each participant and their graduate institutions were given pseudonyms. However, the names of their undergraduate institutions were left intact to provide additional context about their graduate experiences.

### Data Collection

Qualitative research seeks to tease out the emic (insider) perspective of a particular phenomenon by using rich descriptions. “The key concern is understanding the phenomenon of interest from the participants’ perspectives, not the researcher’s” (Merriam, 1998, p. 6). Given this feature and the purpose of my research study, to learn more about the lived experiences of Black and Latino doctoral students, the most fruitful method of data collection for my project was conducting interviews. “We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe...The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person’s perspective” (Patton, 2002, p. 341). Within qualitative research there are a number of different types of interviewing formats that emphasize different aspects of a participant’s experience. In order to create a formal dialogic format I used “semi-structured” interviews. “In this type of interview either all of the

questions are more flexibly worded, or the interview is a mix of more and less structured questions. Usually specific information is desired from all the respondents, in which case there is a highly structured section to the interview” (Merriam, 1998, p. 74). Semi-structured interviews were also particularly useful for my study because it allowed me to transform my standard list of questions and topics to accommodate the racial, gender, or status backgrounds of each of my interviewees. In order to maintain consistency within this process I created a separate *Interview Guide-Second Generation* (**Appendix E**), for both sets of participants “a list of the questions or issues that are to be explored in the course of an interview” (Patton, 2002, p. 343). However I followed two different formats for my first generation vs. my second generation participants. I recruited and interviewed the second generation participants first using the following interview schedule:

- First Interview (establish family, school background, identity construction, conceptualizations of race)
- Second Interview (focus specifically on the doctoral experience)

Once I completed interviews with the second generation of participants, I used themes drawn from those interviews to develop an *Interview Guide-First Generation* (**Appendix F**) for the first generation participants. Because time constraints were a factor, I used an oral history format for those interviews and I only conducted one session. For both generations I used face-to-face interviews and phone interviews because many of my participants were located in different regions of the country at the time of data collection. With their permission, each interview session was recorded and transcribed for accuracy.

In addition to interviews I also used *documentation* as a part of my data collection. According to Bogdan & Biklen (1998), documents can consist of personal documents, official documents, and popular culture documents (p.58). “Sometimes these documents are used in connection with, or in support of, the interviews, and participant observation” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 133). A Demographic Survey (**Appendix G**), documentation of school demographics, department demographics, and course offerings, were among a few of the documents that helped to further construct the context, culture, and climate of the lived experiences for Black and Latino students gathered during their interviews.

#### Reliability/Validity

According to Yin (2003) there are three principles of data collection that “can help to deal with the problems of establishing the construct validity and reliability of the case study evidence. The three are as follows: use multiple sources of evidence; create a case study database; maintain a chain of evidence” (p.97). Although I am not formally using case study methods, each of these principals of data collection is helpful in establishing validity and reliability within my study. In order to “maintain a chain of evidence” for Yin’s third principle I kept an interview diary for each of the interviews I conducted, that documented the challenges, successes, and changes that were made. In addition to reliability I also used two additional techniques to increase my research validity:

- Identify Researcher Bias: As a doctoral student of color my position may have influenced the way I framed the topic and generated questions for the

participants being interviewed because we may share common academic experiences and ethnic backgrounds. My role as a member of the community I was studying also allowed participants to feel more at ease to speak openly and candidly during the interview process. For example, during a phone interview with my second generation Latino male participant, he stopped in the midst of sharing a very personal story to confirm that I was African American. By confirming that I was a student of color, he was less apprehensive about sharing his personal experiences.

- Member checks: To guarantee that the interview transcriptions accurately conveyed the thoughts and feelings of the graduate students I had each participant review the notes and transcripts outlined from their interviews.

Another important component within the reliability and validity of this study was the consideration of generalizability. Because I used a very small sample of cases, the findings of this research were not meant to be generalizable to all Black and Latino doctoral students. Maxwell (2005) calls this “external generalizability” because it can be applied to other groups beyond the one studied. However, “internal generalizability refers to the generalizability of a conclusion *within* the setting or group studied” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 115). Within my discussion and analysis, I make several assertions about generational similarities and differences within doctoral education as a measure of generalizing within the group that I studied.

### Data Analysis

The identification of themes and patterns is an important tool of data analysis within all forms of research. In qualitative research however, because the emphasis is to focus “on descriptions of what people experience and how it is that they experience what they experience...the experiences of different people are bracketed, analyzed, and compared to identify the essences of the phenomenon, for example...the essence of being a participant in a particular program” (Patton, 2002, 106-107). Throughout the data analysis process, I manually combed through each of the interview transcriptions for each participant in order to identify themes, code them into categories, and analyze their meaning and significance. As categories and themes emerged from each group of participants, it allowed me to take my analysis a step further by drawing from my theoretical framework of CRT, LatCRT, and social/cultural capital. The additional patterns that were uncovered provided me with the tools to craft a counter-narrative of their experiences.

Once I understood and articulated the complexity of the themes gathered from my interviews and documentation, I then began to theorize about the significance of their common experiences. By capturing their unique and common lived experiences I established a relationship with the existing literature on Black and Latino doctoral students. Parallels I found within my research and the existing literature enabled me to begin making suggestions about the trajectory for under-representation. Throughout the entire process of data collection I worked to interpret my data as I was collecting it from each group of participants. According to Yin (2003), “You must also be able to *interpret* the information as it is being collected

and to know immediately, for instance, if several sources of information contradict one another and lead to the need for additional evidence” ( p.61). This strategy was particularly useful when I began reviewing the data from all of my preliminary interviews. Initially when I began recruitment, I could not find a first generation Latino male to participate and I decided to omit that perspective from my framework. However, it was because of the early data analysis that I realized it was imperative that I recruit a first generation Latino male scholar. The findings would have been unbalanced without his perspective.

### ***PARTICIPANT INTRODUCTIONS***

Within and across both generations of participants that I recruited, there were several differences and similarities in class backgrounds, family backgrounds, academic training, and schooling experiences. Although my intent was to focus on Black and Latino students, neither group was homogenous. The nomenclature for racial identification I employed was “Black” and “Latino.” The history of racial identification for the Black community in the U.S. has been one marked by constant change. “Over the past century, the standard terms for Black has shifted from ‘Colored,’ to ‘Negro,’ to ‘Black,’ and now perhaps to ‘African American.’” (Smith, 1992, p. 496). Although all of my Black participants were of African American descent, I chose to use “Black” because it encompassed the experiences of Black people from other nationalities as well. In addition, I also used “Latino” instead of “Hispanic” in order to recognize the various ethnicities that fall within that term even though each of my participants were from Mexican American backgrounds. Furthermore, “in contrast to the term ‘Hispanic,’ the term ‘Latino’ has come to be

used increasingly as a form of self-definition, re-thinking, and empowerment on the part of Latinos and Latinas particularly in response to a government-imposed classification” (cited in Morín, 2009, p.10). However each participant selected their own terms for racial identification, as evinced in the participant profiles (Table 1; Table 2).

### Second Generation

<b>Participant Name/Race/Ethnicity*</b>	<b>Institution*</b>	<b>Year in their program at the time of the interview summer 2007</b>
Elvira Rodriguez (Hispanic/Mexican female)	Atlantic University (RU/VH)	*Entering her 3 <sup>rd</sup> year *Finishing coursework *Teaching
Cherie Jenkins (African-American female)	Recruit University (RU/VH)	*Entering 4th year *Finished exams *Writing Proposal
Juan Domingo (Chicano male)	Graduate University (RU/VH)	*Entering 5 <sup>th</sup> year *Finishing up his dissertation
Cross Damon (African American male)	Block University (RU/VH)	*Entering 4 <sup>th</sup> year *Finishing last set of exams *Writing proposal

Table 1. Second Generation Participant Profiles

\*Participants selected their own pseudonyms and racial identification

\*Author selected the pseudonyms for their graduate institutions and each institution was listed according to their Carnegie classification (RU/VH- Research university, very high research activity)

### **Elvira Rodriquez**

Elvira was my first study participant (after my earlier pilot) and I recruited her through snowball sampling. In some ways she served as test subject for my study as I hashed out the interview process for the first time. Luckily though, because she was on the East Coast pursuing her doctorate at an institution in the Mid-Atlantic, it was relatively easy for me to schedule two face to face interviews with her. We

agreed to meet on her campus at an outside picnic table where we had privacy and little distractions.

Elvira was a twenty-something doctoral student approaching her third year of graduate school at the time of our interview during the summer of 2007. She grew up in Northern Florida and was the oldest of five children. Her parents were migrant farm workers but they always made sure that she and her siblings were enrolled in school.

*We grew up in a farm-worker community, farm-worker experience, so we traveled a lot...my parents really as far as education...they never took us out of school...even as school started. [When] the new school year started in another state we would be enrolled in school there. Usually the time we would come back to Florida would be around the end of October, first week in November.*

Seeing her parents struggle was an important feature of Elvira's experiences growing up because it really motivated her to stay in school so that she could one day make life easier for her family. *"I knew a lot about how much my parents struggled for me. I knew I would do anything to make their lives as simple...not necessarily simple but not make their lives any harder. I knew that even a high school education would help me and also help my family."*

Elvira was always very aware of race, class, and gender dynamics throughout her schooling and home experiences growing up. At an early age she recognized how much more difficult it was for the women in her community. And as a result, her mother always taught her *"to be as independent as possible."* The school bus-stop



was one of the first places where she really took note of the race and class differences in her community.

*I lived in the barrio adjacent to a very, middle-class, almost affluent, like subdivision, and they were literally adjacent to each other. So the white kids that lived there we rode the same bus. They would roll up into our barrio and it was like trailers and it was really a different experience. So I would always think about that, what they think, because they would ride through our hood and we never actually rolled through their hood because that's just how the bus-route was.*

As a result of these school bus experiences she understood race relations at her high school as very brown and white. Because she had a strong interest in school, she quickly became type-caste as the “*smart Mexican girl*.” Within the classroom, she often felt invisible among the white students, because she was often times the only brown student in her classes. “*I didn't really talk to them and they didn't really make any effort to engage with me...so I just really felt uncomfortable and invisible.*”

Despite the invisibility, Elvira admitted those experiences bolstered her because she learned how to navigate “*the world with white people.*”

After high school, she attended a state university not far from her home that was much more diverse than her high school. During college she participated in programs like McNair and the Institute for the Recruitment of Teachers (IRT). Her participation in both of those programs really motivated her to pursue her doctorate.

## **Cherie Jenkins**

Cherie was my second study participant. She responded to an email announcement that was circulated on Facebook. Although she attended a university in the Northeast, at the time of the interview she was living in the Midwest so I decided to conduct phone interview sessions with her. Cherie was highly energetic and extremely excited about participating in my study. At the time of the interview, during the summer of 2007, she had just completed her third year as a doctoral student at Recruit University.

Cherie grew up in both Chicago and Texas. She had 6 brothers and sisters and all of them had college degrees, and at least three of them were pursuing doctorates. Her father worked for the government as an inspector over transportation, and her mother had a Ph.D. and worked as a university professor. Although the family moved around a lot, Cherie's mother always made sure they moved to a district with the best schools. However, most of the schools she attended early in her education lacked diversity and her older siblings were often confronted with racial slurs.

*And so we were in a really good school district and that was great but the only problem was there was not a lot of diversity...and there definitely were a lot of racial problems especially for my sister who was in high school. Being called the n word and having to battle with teachers. They thought that my brother was retarded or something like that when he was actually gifted, like all of these problems my parents had to face, but for the most part I had a happy childhood, happy elementary school.*

Despite the racial encounters, Cherie still felt that she received the best education during her early schooling.

During high school Jenkins and her family moved to Texas. Although there was a significant amount of Black students at her school, she realized that there were very few in the honors or advanced placement courses.

*Though...there was a significant portion of African American students you could see that the school had picked out basically who they wanted to succeed. And so getting into an AP class, getting into an honors class was extremely difficult. I wanted something that was more challenging so I took AP English. And I had the hardest time in that class and I think I was frustrated because...I even wrote a letter to the teacher, I just had drama...I didn't feel like I was being listened to or that they cared about black students or making sure that when you're reading particular literatures it isn't just all by old white men. Even if it was just by a woman I would've been happy to have literature by women, but it was not diverse at all and so that was frustrating.*

Class was also an important part of her high school experiences because it was the first time that she realized that there were two sets of black students in her school; those who were going to college and those who were not. Although the Black students at her school were all friends, certain cliques were formed around socio-economic background.

After high school, Cherie decided to attend an HBCU in part because of the racial encounters she experienced during her schooling experiences growing up and

because she “*was tired of predominantly white schools.*” Her experiences at Howard University were very different from high school. “*I felt nurtured, I felt like there was a push for me to succeed. There was just a push for you to do well...I never experienced that at the schools in which I was growing up. It was always a battle.*” Like Elvira, Cherie participated in the McNair program, and from that point forward knew that she wanted to pursue a doctorate.

### **Cross Damon**

My third participant was Cross Damon. We were both participants in the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program and I was able to recruit him at the annual Mellon graduate conference. Although he attended a Southeastern university, we were able to schedule one face-to-face interview because he was collecting research in New York City during the summer of 2007. We conducted the second interview over the phone. Although Cross was a very quiet and mild-mannered person, he was very forthcoming and concise about his experiences during our interviews. At the time of the interview sessions he was preparing to start his fourth year of graduate school.

Cross grew up near Jackson, Mississippi in between the city and the country. Although he was an only child, he had a very large extended family with five uncles and four aunts. Both of his parents were teachers and he always assumed that he would grow up to become a teacher as well. In middle school Cross participated in advanced classes and by high school he was in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. Race did not have a big impact on his experiences growing up because for most of his schooling experiences Cross attended predominantly Black schools and

lived in a predominantly Black town. It wasn't until he got older and learned to drive, that race began to impact his experiences.

*I got pulled over once for no reason...and when I went to Tougaloo they gave us talks about where not to go in the city and where not to get arrested and that sort of thing because Tougaloo was right on the line between Jackson which was mostly Black and mostly middle to working class, and Madison which was mostly white and middle to upper class. So they told us not to go on the other side because you could get pulled over for no reason.*

Class and gender were more pronounced for Cross as he was growing up because his Mother supported them alone on her teacher's salary. He began to notice class divisions in high school with some of his peers who were able to participate in elite social networking programs like Jack and Jill.

*I grew up always thinking about money because my mom was on a teacher's salary and so we always had enough to get by, but we also always had to think about it like you can't get this and you had to wait for that. It wasn't until I got into high school that I kind of started thinking about where I was in terms of class because some of my classmates were doing the Jack and Jill type stuff that I knew nothing about. A lot of stuff I think about in hindsight.*

Gender was important for him because his mother raised him and growing up he was always conscious of fathers with their children.

*The one thing I have been very conscious about is Fathers...and noticing when a man is with children and stuff because it just seems strange because I never really saw too many men taking care of families. So part of me, there's*

*a part that's kind of missing. When I look back and think about what I'm doing now because I didn't really have too many male figures in my life until I got in band, the band director. He was the first real male figure that talked about being responsible and leadership.*

Despite that key component that was missing from his childhood, Cross went on to college and did very well. During his sophomore year he participated in the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship program and that was his first time considering a career beyond being a high school teacher.

### **Juan Domingo**

Juan was my last second generation study participant and he was the hardest to recruit. After several failed attempts to recruit a Latino male that fit all of my criteria, I got an email from Juan expressing interest in my study. I decided to take him on as a study participant even though he was pursuing his doctorate in Anthropology because he matched all of my other criteria. Even though Juan attended a Northeastern university he was living back in his home state of California for the summer so I had to schedule two phone interviews. At the time of the interview, during the summer of 2007, Juan was preparing to start his fifth year of graduate school.

Like Elvira, Juan grew up with a migrant farm worker background, but he grew up on the West Coast in California. Although his father came from a migrant farm labor background, his mother was “*Mexican middle-class*.” She migrated to the United States only to marry his father. Juan, his two brothers, and mother and father all lived in a migrant labor camp when he was growing up. They would travel back

and forth between Northern and Southern California picking crops for farmers. As a result of the traveling, Juan participated in the Migrant Education Program.

*So we went to migrant head start before we were five. Then it was kind of weird because with the migrant students the overall perception is that you're going to drop out of school so you don't really get the best education. But my parents for some reason really tried to focus on overcoming that.*

According to Juan, students in the Migrant Education program were often shifted from school to school and he remembered “*like for five years we were going to different schools.*” One year he decided that he wanted to go to one of the better schools and was met with opposition from the principal. He recalled his father speaking to the superintendent of their school district in order to get him into that particular school but they would only allow him and not his brother too. To make a statement his father decided not to enroll either one of them in school for a few months. Later on in his schooling experiences, Juan encountered other forms of opposition when he wanted to enroll in college preparatory classes. After many struggles he was finally placed on the college track. This was important to him because, “*I already knew I had to support my parents in terms of education.*” Like all of the other second generation participants, it wasn't until college and his participation in the McNair program that he decided to pursue a doctorate.

### First Generation

<b>Participant Name/Race/Ethnicity*</b>	<b>Institution*</b>	<b>Year Started-Year Completed Ph.D.</b>
María Lopez (Mestizo female)	Hallmark University (RU/VH)	1977-1982
Deborah Jackson (Black female)	Hallmark University (RU/VH)	1969-1974
Carlos Sanchez (Chicano male)	Hallmark University (RU/VH)	1973-1978
Walter Smith (Black American male)	West Coast University (MA) (RU/VH) Atlantic University (Ph.D.) (RU/VH)	1967-1969 (MA) 1973-1985 (Ph.D.)

Table 2. First Generation Participant Profiles

\*Participants selected their own racial identification and author assigned their personal pseudonyms

\*Author assigned institutional pseudonyms and each institution was listed according to their Carnegie classification (RU/VH- Research university, very high research activity)

### **María Lopez**

After several months of unsuccessful attempts to recruit first generation study participants I found one great lead. María Lopez, Mexican American female, was the first of the four “first generation” study participants that I interviewed in September 2007. She was very cordial and receptive to my dissertation topic and accepted my invitation to participate. Because she lives on the West Coast and I on the East, we agreed to do a phone interview. Although we had a few false starts the day of the scheduled interview (she had to call me back after my initial call), once it officially began it went off without a hitch.

María was born in 1955 and she grew up in both the Florida Keys *and* Panama City, Florida. Because her father was a fisherman the family would move back and forth throughout the year between Northern and Southern Florida. By eighth grade the constant moving back and forth throughout the year had heavily



impacted María's schooling. As a result, her mother decided to keep her in Northern Florida while her Father worked in Southern Florida.

*I would start school at one school, from September to November. And then I didn't particularly care for school and I would beg my parents not to let me start at the new school until January. So I would be at that school until about Easter and then I would either finish up at the school in Northern Florida that I started in September or when my parents had money I went to Catholic school. When they didn't I went to public school. And so I could go to like 3 different schools in a year. This did not do well for my academic achievement, switching schools. It was when I was in 8<sup>th</sup> grade that my mother decided this was messing me up academically, and it was, and so she stayed with me in Northern Florida when my Dad went to Southern Florida to do fishing in the winter. So my Dad would be separated from the family from Thanksgiving and he would come home Christmas and then he would go right back down until Easter. And he only did that for a couple of years because he didn't like being away from the family.*

Race and prejudice were also key elements of María's childhood. Although her father was white and her mother was Mexican, María identified mostly with her Mexican heritage because her father's family had disowned him after he married her mother. At an early age she understood race and discrimination.

*I was a Mexican American who grew up in the Deep South. My grandmother, who lived with us, spoke only Spanish off and on ...So people would come to us and say 'what foreign language is your grandmother speaking?' 'What is*

*your mother speaking'? I would say 'oh that's Spanish.' But in that time period it was very...I understood segregation at an early age. I remember the station at the corner that had the restroom "men", "ladies", and "colored". And I'd ask my mother 'which one do I go to?'...and my mother would say 'you wait until you get home.' That was her attitude because it was a sort of an in between space. We lived in a white neighborhood but it wasn't like we were universally accepted. So it really was a sort of an in between space.*

As she grew up and matriculated through middle school and high school, María began to develop a more sophisticated understanding of racial prejudice because of her own racial encounters in school. In one particular incident she recalls being discouraged to attend college because of her seventh grade IQ score.

*I had an IQ test when I was in seventh grade and it said I had an IQ of like 100. And so when it came time to apply for colleges the end of senior year, I asked my guidance counselor for a letter and the guidance counselor wouldn't write me a letter for a four year college because she said my IQ test in seventh grade showed I wasn't college material.*

In another incident she recalls being denied access into honors courses because of her race and ethnicity.

*I've never taken Algebra 2. I was in business/math track. The only way I got into honors classes my senior year when I finally realized honors classes were important was the fact that my father threatened to go to the school board...My junior English teacher had decided that I should try to take the test to get in AP English because I had been making A's in the class and sure*

*enough I did well enough on the test and everything but I wasn't admitted. My dad went up to visit Ms. F, who taught Honors/AP English, and wanted to know why I wasn't in there. And she looked at my dad...and me (I'm in the room) and she said 'María is not as smart as she thinks she is. She'd be a much happier child if she learned to accept her limitations. It would be a cruelty to put her in honors class because she would not be able to keep up.' I can remember my dad saying 'she got the grades, she passed the test, what's wrong with this picture?' And he kept pressing her, and finally he looked at her, and she looked at him and she looked at me and she said 'I've never had a minority child in my four years of teaching and I'm not going to have one now.'*

Despite all of the challenges that she faced during her secondary schooling, María prevailed and made it to a local community college in Florida and then a four year public university. While there, she gained the positive affirmations and support from the faculty that propelled her into a doctoral program in 1978 at Hallmark University where she received a Danforth Fellowship.

### **Walter Smith**

After recruiting María Lopez, nearly a month and a half passed before I was able to recruit my next first generation study participant, Walter Smith, a first generation African American male. During November 2007, I was able to schedule a face-to-face interview with Walter because we both reside on the East Coast. Because I was meeting him mid-day on the college campus where he taught, we decided to meet over lunch. Although meeting over lunch proved to be a challenge,

particularly because of the background noise and distractions from our meal, Walter was very candid and forthright about his political views, social activism, and his family life.

Walter was born in Gary, Indiana in 1942. His father, a former military officer, was originally from New York and his mother was from Mississippi. According to Walter, Gary, Indiana was a popular destination at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century because it was a big steel town and provided many job opportunities. The family didn't stay in Gary long; by the time he was 11 years old the family had moved to Los Angeles, where he spent the remainder of his childhood. While growing up there, Walter attended LA public schools. He graduated in 1961 from one of the better known high schools in LA at the time that was 99% Jewish according to his recollections. Reading and learning were always important during his childhood. *"I grew up in a household in which reading was very important. My dad said when you learn how to read you can go any place in the world. You develop your mind and no matter how much you might be imprisoned your mind is important. And so for me reading was always key."* A couple of years after high school Walter decided to attend the HBCU, North Carolina Central University. He was there from 1963-1967. During the interview Walter stopped to reflect on a moment of nostalgia as he recalled his 40<sup>th</sup> reunion that had taken place a month prior to our interview in November, 2007.

*Last month we celebrated our 40<sup>th</sup> reunion. It was marvelous...people that I hadn't seen in 40 years. How we change and how we stay the same. People who had wild personalities were still wild. People who were on the quiet side*

*were still the same. It was marvelous. Out of a class of about 250 about 100 people showed up.*

Another candid moment that Walter reflected on was his first marriage in 1965 (during college) and the birth of his son. His marriage became an important backdrop to his later graduate school experiences because of the “nasty” divorce that ensued several years later that left him unable to see his children for 10 years. In spite of the intense family turmoil he battled during the pursuit of both his MA at West Coast University and his Ph.D. at Atlantic University, Walter successfully completed his doctorate several years later in 1985.

### **Deborah Jackson**

The third first generation participant that I was able to interview was Deborah Jackson, an African American female. We met at a small symposium one month prior to my interview with Walter Smith. However at the time that she agreed to do the interview in October 2007 her schedule was full. I contacted her personal assistant to set up a phone interview nearly two months after I recruited her at the symposium. Despite the fact that I told her assistant that I would need at least an hour for the interview, unbeknownst to me he scheduled my appointment with Deborah during the 30-40 minute timeframe before the start of her afternoon lecture. As a result, the interview had to be cut in half. The initial interview was in part unsuccessful because I had to limit the number of questions that I could ask and because she was distracted preparing for her class. However, Deborah graciously agreed to participate in a follow-up phone interview a few days later when she had more time to talk so that I could probe further into some of her experiences.

Deborah Jackson was born in the mid-1940s and raised in Central Valley, CA. She was the middle child and had both an older and younger brother. At that time, her mother was a domestic worker and her father was a construction worker and the family grew up in a working class neighborhood.

*I lived in a working class community. Our school was integrated. There were white students, and Mexicans. From Elementary school I attended the same school and then I went to junior high school for one year at one school and then we moved out of town to a more rural area and I had a different school experience where we were the only Black kids. And then I moved back to town to go back to school at a bigger junior high, and more black kids and that was the same for high school.*

Although Deborah grew up primarily within an integrated neighborhood, racism was still quite pervasive. While living in the rural community, at two different points during her elementary and high school schooling, her family experienced a lot of racial harassment including the brutal beating of her older brother, which eventually forced them to leave.

*I had an elementary school year, or at least partial year and a partial year in high school. And the reason that we left the high school was because my [older] brother was beaten almost to death. There were 4 black students in the whole high school. My brother, me, and 2 girls... We moved to that area and bought property and we had a house so it was like we were coming into that place... So my brother tried out for the football team and they didn't want him on the football team. And so one day he didn't come home from school. He*

*didn't come home with me because I thought that he was practicing football or whatever and he never came home. We didn't know where he was. So we went to look for him and we found him lying in a ditch on the side of the road unconscious. He had been beaten by a white adult who was like the older brother of one of the boys on the football team. So he didn't die but he was badly injured and after that we left the school and went to go to school in town at the school that was near my grandmother's house.*

As a child Deborah understood the harsh reality of racism as a phenomenon that happened everywhere not just in the rural community where her brother was beaten.

*You had experiences where you were apart of things with Black people and you had experiences where some white people didn't want you around. I didn't associate that with being in that rural community. That was just the way the world was. We had racial incidents where we lived before. We just understood that as white people's anger, that's what they do.*

Despite the racial encounters that Deborah experienced during her schooling experiences growing up, the importance of education was always reinforced by her family. The decision to attend college was never an "option" but rather an expectation from her family. *"It was always an expectation. It wasn't like a decision. It was like if you can go then you should go. My older brother was in prison by that time. He had been accused of some wrong-doing that he really didn't do. So by the time I graduated he was already in prison. So it was like maybe one of us can go."* Along with the expectation from her family to attend college there were also various support

networks of teachers and community members that helped equip Deborah with the tools necessary to attend college.

*There were other people that really played a part. At my elementary school there was a Black man, who was a teacher at my elementary school. He wasn't my teacher but he taught at my elementary school and I used to baby-sit for him. His wife was one of the first African Americans to graduate from Hallmark University. So I baby-sat for them and I knew them from about the time I was nine years old and they kept up with me when I was in high school. His wife enrolled me and three other girls from my high school in a statewide Black beauty contest and I won. So they were like my "sponsors" for a lot of things.*

*So there's a term, in Sociology of Education called 'sponsored mobility.' It's different from a mentor. It's not someone who takes you on and says be like me or I'm going to watch your intellectual growth. But they were a sponsor. They constantly looked out for me and found opportunities for me as a couple, as a family. So it was like what middle class Black people have always done to help someone that's not at their same level to get opportunities. So they didn't live in the community but they saw potential and they made sure that I got some things that I needed. I also had a white teacher that did the same thing from my elementary school. When I graduated from high school one of my elementary school teachers came to my graduation.*



As a result of her family's support and the "sponsored mobility" of her former teachers, Deborah was accepted at Hallmark University in 1965 where she completed both her BA and her Ph.D.

### **Carlos Sanchez**

After several unsuccessful attempts to find a first generation Latino male participant I decided to move forward with the data that was collected from each of the other participants. However, once the process of analysis began, it became evident that the additional Latino male perspective was a necessary component of the research. In the spring of 2008 Carlos Sanchez was recruited through snowball sampling to participate in the study because he fit all of the necessary criteria; he identified as Chicano and he completed his doctorate in 1978 at a PWI. Like the other first generation participants, Carlos was very forthcoming about his family, his childhood, and his academic experiences.

Carlos Sanchez was born in 1950 and raised in Corpus Christi, Texas. He grew up in a very small community that was predominantly Mexican and White. Corpus Christi, like other American cities during that time, was racially divided. *"It was a very highly segregated community. Whites lived in their own neighborhood. Mexicans lived in their own neighborhood."* Although the family permanently resided in that community, they always spent at least half of the year away in other cities because they all worked as seasonal workers. *"Although we lived in the city, we were seasonal farm workers, gone generally 6 months out of the year. We usually went with families in large cattle trucks to Michigan to pick crops."* Like María

Lopez, Carlos's schooling experiences and education were impacted by the seasonal traveling.

*When they ran us out of that area [Michigan] around when school started we would come back and finish the season by picking cotton either in West Texas or the south part of Texas near the Corpus Christi area. I did that all the way up until the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. I didn't go to my first day of class or my last day of class until the 9<sup>th</sup> grade because all my years before that I always came in around October and always left around April.*

Despite the constant movement, Carlos had positive schooling experiences as a child.

Unlike many children his age, school became a source of enjoyment for Carlos Sanchez because it was a welcomed change to his normal routine as a farm worker. *"You know I loved to be in school because it was the only time I could be inside. Being inside was better than being outside in the sun."* Plus Carlos was always very active in school activities including dance and serving as a safety patrol. In addition, because he grew up in a segregated neighborhood, each of the schools he attended was predominantly Mexican. *"In general I had positive school experiences mostly because I went to an all segregated Mexican school. In the elementary school we didn't have any Mexican American teachers. In the middle school we had one Mexican American teacher."* Although Sanchez was tracked into higher level courses during middle school, he did not receive a wealth of support from his teachers. *"At that point especially by middle school there was a tracking system. I was in the higher tracks and the teachers would be more sensitive to us, but for the most part the teachers didn't encourage us that much. But they didn't discourage us either."* Although he

recognized race at an early age, it was not until high school that Sanchez developed a sophisticated understanding of racism and classism.

During the summer of his sophomore year of high school Carlos was selected to participate in an Upward Bound program at Yale University, funded partially by the Ford Foundation. It was during that summer that he garnered his first understanding of racism and classism. Several Black students in the program protested the curriculum because they believed it was racist. When the Black students questioned Carlos about his experiences as a Mexican American he was unaware of any moments when he encountered racism.

*Now they didn't know who Mexican Americans were, right, the African Americans and the others in the program. But they said 'we understand the people of color and minorities have always been discriminated against, we're not the only ones.' And I would say 'no that's not true.' And then they would ask me on a personal level 'when you go to Woolworths in Corpus do you ever get treated differently' and I said 'well no. I don't think so; they always treat me like everybody else.' And they said 'when you go back why don't you notice. Just pay attention when the white people come in, do they treat them differently.'*

Once the administration gave in to the protesters and changed the curriculum, Carlos was also exposed to more information about race and class on an intellectual level. When Carlos returned home he began to recognize, for the first time, the discriminatory treatment Mexican Americans faced in his community, as a result of those conversations, and the revised curriculum. In one instance at the local Woolworths, he

realized that he was not receiving fair treatment by the waitresses. At that moment he staged an impromptu sit-in and demanded service. It was from that moment on that Carlos cultivated his activism.

Carlos's summer experiences at Yale, coupled with his good grades afforded him the opportunity to attend Columbia University as an undergraduate. While there he remained actively involved in issues of race and class. He and his peers formed the first Latin American Student Association (LASA) on Columbia's campus and they staged many protests in favor of more recruitment of Black and Latino students. Because of his heavy involvement in community activism, Carlos's initial career goals were to attend law school and become a civil rights attorney. However, after an incident in Corpus Christi where he was the victim of police brutality he opted to pursue another career path. Under the advisement of a close friend Carlos considered attending graduate school to pursue a career as a professor. He learned about the Ford Fellowship program through a fellow LASA student and decided to apply for the fellowship. In 1978 he was awarded a five year Ford Fellowship and was accepted to attend Hallmark University.

### *CONCLUSION*

Several frameworks were used to guide the development of my research design. Maxwell's (2005) model for constructing a strong conceptual framework allowed me to use experiential knowledge, existing theory, and pilot studies to launch my initial inquiry of the topic. The use of qualitative research methods was the perfect fit for this research given the emphasis on experience and interpretation. Based on my own experiential knowledge I knew that one of my primary goals for

this study was to centralize the personal narratives of these students. The two primary research questions guiding this study were designed to elicit detailed information and perspectives about the lived experience.

1. How are the experiences of current (2003-2008) second generation Black and Latino doctoral students at predominantly white institutions similar or different to those of first generation Black and Latino scholars that pursued doctorates during the 1960s-1970s? What forms of social and cultural capital are utilized in their experiences and how do they compare over time?
  - a. How are race, ethnicity, and class experienced by Black and Latino Doctoral students at PWIs then and now?
2. How is the current culture and climate of doctoral education at PWIs similar or different to the culture and climate of the late 1960s-1970s?

Once the research problem and questions were formulated, Critical Race Theory and Latino/a Critical Race Theory were used as the foundation of the theoretical framework because they were the most useful vehicles to explicate the racial narratives and experiences of both generations of scholars. Subversive theories of social and cultural capital were layered within the theoretical framework in order to create a tool-kit in which I could fully interrogate and identify the key instruments utilized by Black and Latino students to navigate through the academy.

In chapter three the findings from the first generation interviews are presented in a series of themes informed by social and cultural capital. The emphasis in this

chapter is to outline the graduate experience from a historical point of view in an effort to draw later comparisons to the second generation experience.

## CHAPTER 3: AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IMPLEMENTATION: FINDINGS FROM THE FIRST GENERATION

*You do not wipe away the scars of centuries by saying: 'now, you are free to go where you want, do as you desire, and choose the leaders you please.' You do not take a man who for years has been hobbled by chains, liberated him, bring him, to the starting line of race, saying, 'you are free to compete with all the others,' and still justly believe you have been completely fair (Lyndon B. Johnson, June 4, 1965, speech to the graduating class at Howard University, cited in Bowen & Bok, 1998, p.6).*

### **Introduction**

In his commencement address to the 1965 graduating class of Howard University, Lyndon Johnson consciously recognized that advancing the levels of education for African Americans and other people of color required more than just providing access to more institutions. Instead, racial advancement required a concerted effort to change the racial climate of society as a whole. With that notion in mind, CRT and LatCRT allowed me to gather the counter-stories and narratives of the first generation of Black and Latino scholars in order to understand what the racial culture and climate was like for them at PWIs. "CRT challenges white privilege and refutes the claims that educational institutions make toward objectivity, meritocracy, color-blindness, race neutrality and equal opportunity" (Yosso, 2005, p. 73). Coupled with CRT and LatCRT, Yosso's (2005) interpretations of *community cultural wealth* also allowed me to identify the subversive forms of cultural capital that emerged within the narratives of the first-generation.

Even with new opportunities brought on by Affirmative Action to pursue higher education, the formation of various types of cultural capital was an essential element of the graduate experience for Black and Latino doctoral students. In addition to access, Affirmative Action also created additional funding opportunities in the form of fellowships specifically for students of color. For a generation of scholars that came from an era in which there were few Black and Latino predecessors that pursued doctoral education, those fellowships provided critical funding that served as an important tool in successfully navigating the academy. Once in the academy, the first generation was able to fight for the inclusion of more doctoral students of color. They were also able to transform curricula and research agendas, and once they completed their Ph.D.s they also began to change the face of the faculty in the white academy.

Because there were numerous themes that unfolded in the narratives collected from the first generation, I elected to focus only on the themes that truly elicited an understanding of *community cultural wealth*. The findings from my first generation are framed within four types of cultural capital drawn from Yosso's (2006) paradigm. Aspirational capital, social capital, navigational capital, and resistant capital were each revealed in the counterstories of the first generation in the form of social activism; fellowships; persistence; and peer networks. What's important to note however, is that each of these experiences and the categories they fall under are fluid and interchangeable. Like Barkley Brown's (1989) imagery of the African American quilt, the experiences of these Black and Brown bodies were not always linear and easy to explain within the confines of one box. Recognizing that element of the first



generation's experiences was critical because "...people and actions do move in multiple directions at once. If we analyze those people and actions by linear models, we will create dichotomies, ambiguities, cognitive dissonance, disorientation, and confusion in places where none exist" (Barkley-Brown, 1989, p. 929). The four forms of capital used to frame the experiences of the first-generation are "non-competing entities" that each serve as one thread of the quilt or one piece of the larger picture (Barkley-Brown, 1989, p. 926). When woven together under the community cultural wealth framework each of those threads help to produce a vivid and almost palpable counter-story of the larger Black and Latino doctoral experience.

### *SOCIAL CAPITAL*

The concept of social capital is transformative because it's constantly reinterpreted within different spaces and different contexts. Within the space of graduate school and framed within the context of CRT, "social capital can be understood as networks of people and community resources. These peer and other social contacts can provide both instrumental and emotional support to navigate through society's institutions" (Cited in Yosso, 2005, p. 79). During the time in which each of my first generation participants were in college, there were very few Pre-Doctoral-Prep Programs<sup>4</sup> in place that provided information about the doctoral process. The academic and community networks that Carlos, Deborah, María, and Walter were able to form during their undergrad years were an important factor in their consideration and ultimate matriculation to graduate school. There were several critical conversations had amongst professors, friends, and mentors that not only

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<sup>4</sup> "Pre-Doctoral Prep Program" is a term that I've coined to describe programs or initiatives created with the sole intent of preparing undergraduate students, specifically minorities, for doctoral study.

enabled the first generation to attend graduate school, but also that empowered them to feel confident in their intellectual capabilities. Each of these critical conversations, coupled with the academic success and doctoral completion of each of my first generation participants, serve as a powerful example of the benefits that can be obtained from social capital.

Throughout her secondary schooling experiences María's academic abilities were constantly devalued by her teachers and the school administration. As a result, she lacked faith in her intellect. However, when she was in community college, María finally received the positive affirmations she needed from her professors. *"I went to community college...and that was the first place that I got the affirmation that I was smart because, with the exception of an African American U.S. History teacher in 11<sup>th</sup> grade, I was really not given any credit for what I could do. In community college I was given a lot of encouragement."* When she later enrolled in a four year institution María received additional support, and was strongly encouraged to attend graduate school.

*And I went to Florida State and I had a wonderful mentor, who encouraged me to go to graduate school who basically called me into her office when I was a junior and said 'have you thought about going to graduate school?' And I said graduate school is for people who are rich, who are smart, and I'm not either. I'm going to be a high school history teacher. She goes 'no, no, no there are fellowships, you can do this.' She really encouraged me and sent me catalogues.*

María was also able to transform the social capital she acquired from her mentor into financial capital in the form of a graduate fellowship.

*I had a Danforth fellowship...it was a national fellowship and it was wonderful. It paid 5 years tuition and \$2500 a year, that you're supposed to live off... And it was considered a lot...They chose 100 top seniors across the humanities and sciences. At the time that I received it, they reserved 25 for students of color. I was one of the 25 students of color.*

As a beneficiary of an Affirmative Action based initiative, María, in some ways served as an example of the success that can occur from such programs. The conversation that María had with her mentor not only exposed her to critical knowledge about graduate school, but it also empowered her as a scholar. In Walter's experiences applying to graduate school he also gained a sense of empowerment but from an unexpected source. A white professor that Walter often argued with in class provided him with a dynamic letter of recommendation unbeknownst to him when he submitted his application.

*The chair of the Political Science department was an older white woman and we fought all the time because I thought she had a colonial mentality and she was a purist...and we argued all the time in class. I never disrespected her or called her any names, but we argued a lot... Well when I applied to West Coast University I found out that I got accepted by April because she had written this dynamic letter.*

In addition to writing a letter of recommendation, that same professor also armed Walter with a tool-kit of knowledge that would prepare him for the rigors of graduate school.

*She gave me, and you might call this prep, 3-4 pages of bibliographies. She said 'read all this before graduate school. Political Science is changing and I did not cover these sorts of things. You need to be familiar with this literature and read it before you take your first course'. And I remember taking a speed reading course that summer, read everything on the list and she was right. I was ready after having read that. So that was not a prep kind of course but she told me what to do and I did it.*

The critical support that both María and Walter's professors provided them with was an invaluable form of capital.

When Carlos decided that he did not want to attend law school because a police brutality case he brought against the Corpus Christi police department was dismissed, a close friend suggested that he go to graduate school instead.

*I was in a liberal fraternity, and one of my brothers who was going to law school, said 'don't give up on yourself because of the lawyer who was supposed to help you. If you don't want to go to law school that's okay, but you have all the skills and knowledge that it takes to continue on to graduate school...you have all the grades, you probably have all the letters too to go to a graduate school. You want independence; become a professor, because as a professor you'll be able to critique the society without fear of the society.'*

Although Carlos already had visions of obtaining an advanced degree, the insight provided by his fraternity brother about graduate school, enabled Carlos to explore other options that he was not familiar with or had not considered. Once Carlos learned about his options for graduate school, other peers began to also educate him about fellowship opportunities. One in particular was the Ford Fellowship for minorities. *“So I applied for the Ford, not thinking that I would get it, and then I made the finalist.”* At that point in the process the only school that Carlos was considering for his M.A., was a small, newly established university in his hometown of South Texas. However, once he was selected to interview for the Ford Fellowship, the Mexican American professors that interviewed him, encouraged him to broaden his list of schools.

*During the interview there were three prominent Mexican Americans and... they said, ‘you have all these excellent grades...you have all of this service...You have all these ambitions, but you don’t have any institutions you’re applying to for graduate school.’ And I told them I have one, but he goes ‘but that’s not really an institution.’ So they told me almost the same thing my friend from my fraternity had told me. They started talking to me and they said ‘there’s very few of us in prominent, especially Ivy League schools. We talk about opening doors for our community. The best thing you can do to open a door, is go to an ivy league school, get a Ph.D. Then use that to go back into the community to help the community. So they finally encouraged me to apply to at least one more university, and that university happened to be Hallmark. So I applied to two universities for graduate*

*school. Then when the year ended I got a Ford Fellowship for five years and I got admitted to Hallmark.*

Having peers and other professors to nurture Carlos's understanding of the graduate school process and the options available to him was imperative to his success and his growth as a scholar. Many of the counter-stories from the first generation have revealed that critical forms of social capital such as networking, and exchanging knowledge or resources through formal and informal dialogues were important staples within Black and Latino communities.

For both Carlos and Deborah, pursuing a career involving community work was a top priority. But like Carlos, Deborah was also encouraged by a peer to postpone getting a full-time job in order to attend graduate school.

*I had been working for the community for three years since I was a sophomore. When I graduated, I graduated with honors and I had a relationship with people at the school and in the community. One of them, a counselor at the high school, asked me if I would like to go to some other city working like a job in something like an Upward Bound program. I was contemplating doing that when my roommate, who was already in the Masters program in Education, suggested that I should go talk to her advisor before I made a decision about that job. My roommate was one of the Black students who had been involved in the 'movement' and so I went to talk to her advisor because she said her advisor was doing research on Black students and Black issues...so I went to talk to this lady. And that's when I found out she had a program...I had a choice of going to work and then someone talked with me*

*about a Ph.D. program and a grant that they had and told me that I would make a good candidate for a Ph.D. So I opted not to work and to stay in school to focus on concerns that I had being an undergraduate student doing a lot of community work.*

Being provided information about an alternative career path enabled Deborah to pursue an academic career that was still rooted in community work. Tara Yosso (2005) considers this act a critical exchange between social capital and community networks. “People of Color have utilized their social capital to attain education, legal justice, employment, and health care. In turn, these Communities of Color gave the information and resources they gained through these institutions back to their social networks” (Yosso, 2005, p. 80). In the case of each of my first generation participants, being able to conduct culturally-relevant research was a vital form of giving back because they were able to study several key issues impacting their communities that may have never been studied before.

### ***NAVIGATIONAL CAPITAL***

“Navigational capital refers to skills of maneuvering through social institutions. Historically, this infers the ability to maneuver through institutions not created with Communities of Color in mind” (Yosso, 2005, p. 80). Within the experiences of the first-generation, navigational capital and social capital were interchangeable because many of the peer networks that each of them was able to form not only provided emotional support, they also provided a number of instrumental skills needed to successfully navigate through the doctoral process and

through the spaces of a PWI. Finding confidants among other students of color was a critical navigational strategy utilized by all of the first generation participants.

Carlos had a positive graduate school experience because the peer networks that he was a part of fostered academic and social growth.

*We created our own space and that's what made it so enjoyable. For example, I went into the School of Ed and we had the largest number of Mexican Americans in the country that were in the School of Ed. We had I think over 27 in the Ph.D. program. And so again we came together and some of us were part of those reading circles. And we would come and discuss who the racists among the faculty were.*

Carlos was able to design his program around the knowledge he received from his peers about which professors were racist. That kind of awareness was a key factor in Carlos's ability to successfully navigate through his doctoral process. Because there was such a strong network formed among the Chicano students, they were also empowered to actively challenge the hegemonic paradigms taught in their classes.

*We would go to these classes and they would make all kinds of statements and we'd come together and once in a while we'd confront a faculty member as a group....So we were pushing and creating our own spaces there so we could discuss these issues without fear or intimidation at all. And we had such a strong group. All of us were very determined to create a space around chicanismo and to discuss how race, and class, and the women would come in and say gender, and how those were intersecting variables and you can't eliminate one and consider the problem.*



As a group, Carlos and his peers were able to become active agents of change within their graduate community.

Large networks of Chicano students of color were also a contributing factor in María's successful matriculation through graduate school.

*I had a wonderful peer network of women of color, men of color. But also at the dissertation stage a wonderful sort of 'Feminist Network.' ...we had a wonderful writing group. We'd have potlucks at each other's houses and if your chapter was on the block you didn't have to bring anything that day.*

*They gave you really good feedback. I think the best feedback I've ever gotten on my work was as a doctoral student because everybody really paid attention to what you were doing.*

Being able to rely on a circle of peers with whom she felt comfortable allowed María to garner the critical feedback she needed for her dissertation. In addition to peer networks, María also engaged in a peer mentor relationship with a more advanced graduate student.

*I had wonderful sort of peer mentorship with R.M, who is now a banker in San Francisco... He was studying for Orals and I was in my first year, and since the booklist didn't change that much he basically prepped me. And he knew that I was feeling bad because of the colonial history class...so he was like we're going to study together. So an hour before my class he would sit down with me, and quiz me about the articles that I had read...and he would say 'make this point, Professor X will think you're smart' ...cause he didn't want me to have the experience that he felt that he had.*

When R.M bequeathed the knowledge and strategies that he learned during his first year to María he helped to establish a cycle of support among all of the Chicano students of color.

*A.C. was ahead of me. She didn't know me, but she knew I was there and was studying for exams and I had met her once and she gave me her oral notes. So I had R.M.'s books, and A.C.'s notes. And I passed my notes on to V.C., and it became like the 'woman of color-oral prep notes.' It was that sort of peer-mentorship.*

The cycle of gaining and sharing information was one way that María and her support network were able to dismantle some of the esoteric practices of graduate school that sometimes posed barriers for them as students of color. Those same strategies of support were also integral tools in Deborah's graduate experiences as well.

Deborah and her Black peers studied together outside of class as a strategy of support and accountability. *"We taught ourselves. We had a class outside of class. And you were taking a psych class you got together with other black students and said 'how do you think I should respond to this or what do you think about that?'"*

Being held accountable not only for yourself, but for your peers as well was a critical tool for the first generation because they were more susceptible to being pushed out of the academy because they were minorities within a majority space. In addition to peer networks there were also key mentor relationships established within and outside of the academy that contributed to Deborah's successful navigation through her program. One mentor in particular that helped to shape and broaden the scope of Deborah's scholarship was the chair of African American studies.

*The head of African American Studies had been my sociology professor. There was a body of knowledge that I did not have in my undergraduate experience because African Americans Studies had not been established until I was about a junior and close to graduating.*

*So by working with Dr. Z I expanded my educational background to include a vast knowledge of the Black world and African people all over the world, other movements, and other literatures. And those were conversations that I had never had with faculty members in my academic program because they were pretty much big in the culture deficit analysis of Black education and Black life.*

Community based mentorship was also pervasive throughout her experiences. These forms of mentorship were also vitally important, because they helped to nurture her connections with the movements and community work being done outside of academia and they greatly contributed to her research interests.

*These were community based educators. Older people who had come into the community from other places, or who had been in the community for a very long time. And this was a time when Black studies was beginning to reach out and emphasize community outreach to emphasize the need for research that served the community.*

*So there was an ethos that said that if you're going to be a scholar, to be a researcher, you have an obligation to be of service to the community and to do that you need to be in relationship with the*

*community. So I did community work. I was a volunteer. I taught at a community-based Hallmark University and there were many people I could look up to as people who were using their...they were like Gramsci's Organic Intellectuals. So not because they had Ph.D.s or because they had a particular job position, but because they were demanding quality education and accountability for the community. And to be relevant it would be good for the community to validate what you were going to do. And so those were the people that I learned from. And some of them ended up enrolling as doctoral students at Hallmark University.*

Like Deborah, Walter also had a powerful mentor relationship with an older colleague that he worked with at both West Coast University while pursuing his Master's degree, and at Atlantic University while pursuing his doctorate.

*I had met...E.N at West Coast University...1968, 1969. He was finishing his doctoral degree in political science. He was Ibo from Nigeria and we became very good friends. In fact he became something like an Uncle of mine. He had begun being a mentor to me in 1968 when we met. Because he had come to America in the 50s and got a BA in Political Science...then went to [West Coast University] and started his Ph.D. but then he had to leave to go back to Nigeria. So in the late 60s he returned to America and finished his Ph.D.... So from then on he became like a mentor. Teaching me about IBO culture and...once I became chair of the BSU pointing out in many ways ...white radical revolution stuff was coming... So it was not only the*

*intellectual kinds of things but sort of social-activist issues that he helped me observe and become aware of.*

*And I used to watch him type his dissertation. This was the first time that I saw that...because his dissertation was some 600-700 pages. When it was published later on in the 70s it was two volumes. That was when I'd watch him type... This was my first experience seeing a Ph.D. dissertation. So he was instrumental in so many ways...and in fact he named my second daughter.*

Walter and E.N.'s dynamic was more than just an academic exchange, it was a cultural and political exchange. And like each of the other participants, there was a visible level of social-activism and resistance woven within the formation of their navigational capital.

### ***RESISTANT CAPITAL***

“Resistant capital refers to knowledge and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality. This form of capital is grounded in the legacy of resistance to subordination exhibited by Communities of Color” (Yosso, 2005, p. 80). During the time period in which the first generation pursued their doctorates, acts of resistance and activism were paramount because of the caustic racial climate of the times. For each of my participants there was a real and almost obligatory commitment to fighting for change and inclusion, within and outside of the walls of the white academy. Resistant capital took shape in multiple forms including: protests; forums challenging racist curricula, and participation in affirmative action based committees.

During Walter's graduate experiences pursuing his M.A., several students from the Black Student Union confronted a white faculty member about a Black literature course.

*Those were the days when students were not as reverent towards authority as they are now. So we often challenged professors intellectually. I remember there was one professor, after we had been protesting for Black Studies, who decided that he was going to teach a course in Black American literature and he hadn't taught the course before and as far as we knew had no interest in the field. So he was just going to teach the course. We were already aware of the way many white professors had distorted Black reality and so we were concerned. So we went to him and told him he wasn't going to teach the course, about several members of the Black Student Union. And of course he didn't hear us initially. But after we finished talking to him for about a half hour or 45 minutes he decided not to teach the course.*

By actively challenging the faculty, Walter and the BSU were able to reject the possibility of being taught racist distortions of Black culture. Walter's experiences embodied the true meaning of resistance and the capital that can form from challenging racist paradigms. However, when he spoke about the current state of Black graduate education he was sadly disappointed to see that the current generation of doctoral students and junior faculty of color were not continuing in that same spirit. Somewhere along the historical pipeline, resistance as a tool for learning and building communities within and outside of academia was lost for the second generation of doctoral students of color.

*I've seen myself as an "Activist Professor." I have challenged students in the classroom and supported them in their activities outside of the classroom. In many ways it's gotten me into a lot of trouble. My hope is that as younger generations of Black people obtain doctorates that they will remember the long struggle that Black people have waged for generations so that they could get advanced degrees. I am well aware that obtaining a Ph.D. was set in motion by people now dead. Black people struggled so that we could advance in society. My fear is that younger generations of doctoral students and professors are forgetting this long struggle and forgetting that they should be involved in this long struggle. I get the impression, looking at a number of younger professors entering the field that they merely want to be professors. And that the model of a DuBois, who was an intellectual activist, is something that they know nothing about. Something that they don't want to know anything about. And many see themselves as an individual and not part of a collective struggle. That bothers me. I hope that the future does not move in that direction although that is what I see.... My fear is that Black people have in many ways set the struggle aside and I'm bothered by that.*

Walter's disdain about the lack of struggle and activism present within the current generation is evidence that social justice initiatives and academic pursuits worked hand in hand for the first generation. The believed absence of that partnership among the second generation was deeply regrettable for Walter.

Confronting faculty and challenging racist curricula were also tools of resistance utilized in Deborah's graduate school experiences as well.

*There were experiences with almost every professor because what they were teaching was detrimental to my well being. What they actually had in the text book and what they were actually standing in the classroom to say was a constant assault. So either you took it and took it in and began to see yourself the way they saw you or you said 'that is not true, where's your evidence? This is not my experience.'*

*We were the first group of Black students from the non-middle class who came into Hallmark University. Prior to that the people who came to Hallmark University were more like the white people. So my undergraduate class and a number of people I went to graduate school with did not fit that mold. And we were abrasive. We resisted. We did not accept it. And as a result the institution changed...So another black student in my program and I organized a faculty forum. And we invited all of the faculty to come to our forum and we presented what we thought was wrong with what they were teaching. And we did not ask any white students 'do you think this is a good idea?'*

Deborah's bold and brave tactics to combat racism indicate that she and her peers were not easily intimidated or fearful of the possible consequences they could have endured. Nor were they concerned about the opinions of their white peers. In Beverly Tatum's (1997) identity development model she notes that "...during the immersion/emersion phase the developing Black person sees White people as simply irrelevant. This is not to say that anger is totally absent, but that the focus of attention is on self-discovery rather than on white people" (p.76). So for Deborah and her peers



the focus was on combating social injustices they witnessed within and outside of their institution. Reverence towards white students or faculty was not important. Because of those intense struggles, she like Walter, she also expressed criticism about the current generation and their inability to fight against wrong-doings they encountered in graduate school.

*I think they're cut off from any sense of movement and they feel more isolated than we did. They don't know the history, and they don't know the institutional debt that really should be paid. So they don't have a context. As I listen to all this whining, it's unfamiliar to me. I never experienced that as a student.*

Though both Deborah and Walter speculated that the current generations of doctoral students of color were disconnected from their histories, Deborah did acknowledge possible reasons for the differences in their experiences.

*So I think part of what you're seeing is the absence of a social movement. That students are isolated from the community because there's no social movement that's informing the direction of their study. So they're like hostages inside these institutions.*

For Carlos and María, resistant capital was formed around the policies of Affirmative Action, and some of the earlier court cases brought about challenging its importance. The large Chicano network that supported Carlos academically was also an important network in the formation of social activism.

*When we had that large group at Hallmark, we were still asking to recruit Chicanos, not just to the school of education but to other departments. And we were asking the university for example, not to pay attention to the low test*

*scores. Or if they were going to pay attention then consider the reasons for the low test scores.*

*And so we were in support of establishing a separate category. For example, I participated in the admissions committee at Hallmark. I was in the admissions committee for two years. And when we had a candidate or so that didn't meet the criteria they would have a special meeting around that. And that's when you consider those sorts of issues around Affirmative Action in terms of what factors these students were coming in with lower standards.*

María participated in social activism by attending protests and participating in various rallies.

*During my undergrad years, the ERA (Equal Rights Amendment) was being debated. I remember going on the capital steps and protesting in favor of the Equal Rights Amendment. Also the Klan rally, I participated in an Anti-Klan rally as an undergrad. As a graduate student certainly Bakke was a big thing...I used to get teased a lot because I would go to the demonstrations and I would take a book with me. Absolutely the United farm workers union, you know support for the farm workers on campus. Food drives, clothing drives, that sort of thing. I did not do, one of my big regrets...several of my compadres did which was go work for the farm workers for a summer. I never did that and it's a regret that I have. I wish that I did because it's a life-changing experience.*

As Student Activists, Walter, María, Deborah, and Carlos were able to transform their academic spaces through the use of protests and resistance. And even in some

instances, the tangible benefits of those fights brought about major institutional change.

### ***ASPIRATIONAL CAPITAL***

“Aspirational capital refers to the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future even in the face of real and perceived barriers” (Yosso, 2005, p. 77). As in the case of the other forms of capital identified within this chapter, there is no clear line to delineate one type of capital from the other particularly as it pertains to the first generation experiences. Aspirational capital like navigational capital encompasses resiliency. The first generation confronted numerous moments of marginalization because they were students of color. However, their hope, resiliency, and resistance to various acts of discrimination helped to sustain them throughout their individual journeys and instilled them with the fortitude needed to successfully complete their doctorates. That level of commitment and success was especially remarkable during that time period because there were very few Black and Latino students pursuing and completing Ph.D. programs (Anderson, 2002). And in both Walter and María’s experiences they witnessed other students of color succumb to the pressures and discrimination of graduate school. Walter recalled a moment in his graduate experiences where a friend of his at another institution decided not to finish his Ph.D. program because he “*was being told that Philosophy is a white man’s discipline.*” María’s peer mentor, R.M., who helped her prepare for her courses, was pushed out of the Ph.D. program a week before his oral exams because of numerous pressures and self-doubt. Like María, he had encountered several instances of marginalization his first year.

*He like me had gotten buffeted his first year, jacketed like he was dumb and someone who didn't belong there... I think he was pushed out. I think he got a lot of family pressure and I think he had his own sort of self-doubts. And I think he was so buffeted by it that that contributed to his self-doubt, the idea that he didn't belong. But I think that he would've passed, I think he would've been a fabulous historian. He was a wonderful teacher.*

In spite of those tragic stories, both Walter and María persisted despite battling their own bouts with discrimination, prejudice, and humiliation.

During her first year in graduate school, María battled with academic insecurity because she was made to feel dumb because she came from a less prominent school than some of her white peers.

*Everyone else had come from these really fancy schools. People had come from Columbia, Duke, Harvard, Smith and I came from Florida State. And it was like for example... in colonial history class, I didn't know how to theorize a book, I could describe it, I could pick out the thesis but I couldn't get into the framework. I had not learned that and I was dealing with people who could conceptualize at that level.*

In one instance she was publicly humiliated amongst her white peers by a white professor that denigrated her intellectual abilities.

*At the end of my first year I got rocked really well...we had to write a 25-30 page paper on a historian...I wanted to do Gerda Lerner but was told that no woman had done enough scholarly work in US history in order to reach iconic status...So he gave me Richard Hofstadter. I finished the paper early. I*

*gave it to him early for comments. He tore it up. I appreciated the comments. I revised exactly to his specifications and then the last day of class he read my paper in front of the class. And he said 'this is a very fine undergraduate paper, but it's not graduate quality, and it's not graduate quality for Hallmark.' I didn't cry until I got to my car. Even after the smart remarks I got from my Euro-American peers after class. I didn't cry until I got to the car. And I remember I cried and cried.*

Although, her initial instincts were to leave Hallmark after such a devastating incident, María pushed past the experience with the help of her family and other support networks. And despite the white students' perceptions of her abilities, she continued to focus on her goals. *"I felt that some of my Euro-American peers thought that I was sort of the 'Affirmative Action baby' that I really didn't deserve being there, but I just sort of ignored it. I wasn't going to let their opinions of me derail my passion for history or the things that I wanted to do."* Graduate school was riddled with other experiences that required an immense amount of strength and personal courageousness.

Walter struggled against several different barriers that posed as potential threats to his success. Like María, he encountered struggles within the classroom surrounding his academic work.

*Well there was one person in the Government and Politics department, a political philosopher; I took a course with him. I wrote a paper on Hobbs and slavery. This guy was trained at University of Chicago, and was the Strauss type...and this fool would not take my paper, but made a comment in class*

*(there were three in class), and suggested that I hadn't written a paper. So I followed him right up to his office that night, because to me a Ph.D. was not more important than my own integrity. I was getting ready to have it out with him, and I said 'do you suggest that I didn't write this paper' and then he backed away from me and he still wouldn't take my paper.*

*So I spent the whole summer working on a paper on the concept of slavery and Western Civilization, but it was a much longer paper...So when the fall semester began I gave him the paper...and I said to myself if you don't like Hobbs and slavery then I'm going to give you the concept of slavery in western civilization not realizing the Straussians don't actually work like that.*

*So ever so often in the fall semester I'd see him and say Professor have you finished my paper yet? Then I wouldn't see him again all semester long. Then I guess sometime at the end of the semester I happened to see him and then he said 'you can come and get your paper.' So I walked up and looked at my paper and there was no grade on the paper...and he said oh 'it's a B. Everybody here knows that a B from me is like an A from anybody else'. And I said 'well why didn't you give me an A then', and I walked away.*

Despite visible signs of antagonism from his professor, Walter diligently worked to prove himself as a scholar. The process of proving oneself as an intellectual was evident not only in the first generation but also among the second generation. In addition to barriers within class, Walter also battled with isolation. *"But I can tell you this that I know it was quite an alienating experience. There were no Black*

*faculty. The white faculty weren't that friendly."* Outside of the pressures within the academy, Walter also confronted many obstacles surrounding his personal life.

*When I was at Atlantic University I was working full time. I was in a terrible marriage and ended up getting a divorce...sometimes I look back and say I was lucky to have gotten a Ph.D. because there was so much horror in my life.*

Resiliency was imperative in Walter's experiences because he was forced to deal with numerous instances of adversity. Establishing a currency of hope in the face of harsh obstacles was in some ways a derivative of the intense and bitter struggles against racism and prejudice that characterized the time period in which the first generation participants attended college and graduate school. That currency however was a key building block in the construction of a community cultural wealth that has clear connections to the second generation.

## ***CONCLUSION***

Because each of these forms of capital overlap in numerous ways, a complex matrix comprised of capital and counter-stories unfolded as I began to analyze these findings. The community cultural wealth framework revealed that the formation of capital took place in many informal contexts for the first generation. Informal conversations, peer networks, and social activism were among some of the features that contributed to their growth as scholars. Even in the face of racist barriers, the first generation relied on various mechanisms of hope and motivation to persist. In many ways the cultural wealth built among these scholars created a sort of "generational wealth" that could be sustained and bequeathed to many later generations. In chapter four, the same framework is used to present the findings of

the second generation and in many instances the fruits of the first generation's labor are revealed.



## CHAPTER 4: AFFIRMATIVE ACTION DISMEMBERMENT: FINDINGS FROM THE SECOND GENERATION

*“Many institutions do not consider race at all in admissions and scholarship determinations, or have done away with race-conscious affirmative action programs within the last several years. Admission trends from 2004 indicate that close to 60 percent of the responding institutions indicated that the applicant’s race or ethnicity had no importance in the admission process” (Beckman, 2006, p.6)*

### **Introduction**

With race no longer being considered an important factor in admissions decisions, the current culture and climate of higher education is rapidly changing because of new definitions of diversity that are being formed. One of the key questions that emerged concerning this research was how those changes have or have not been translated in the experiences of current Black and Latino doctoral students. Like the narratives of the first generation, CRT and LatCRT were important tools in gathering and developing the counter-stories of these student populations. CRT, and LatCRT were especially useful paradigms to construct the counter-stories of the current students because both theories provided an oppositional lens to understand the participants’ experiences as students of color in the 21<sup>st</sup> century during a time when the need for racial diversity in programs and at institutions of higher education is losing priority or being eliminated all together. “Stories by and about Outsiders resist the subordinating messages of the dominant culture by challenging stereotypes and presenting and representing people of color as complex and heterogeneous”

(Montoya, 2002, p. 244). Yosso's (2005) *community cultural wealth* framework was also used to construct the lens through which my findings were presented.

In that regard, this chapter, like chapter 3, is constructed around the important counter-stories told by each of my participants and framed within *social capital*, *aspirational capital*, *navigational capital*, and *resistant capital*. Although the same forms of capital were present, in some instances they were manifested very differently from the first generation. For example, the second generation received more formal introductions to graduate school because of their participation in Pre-doctoral Prep Programs (P.P.P). In addition, identifying real and perceived forms of capital were important in my interviews and findings with the second generation. They shared multiple opinions about what strategies are and are not important in graduate school, even if they were not visible within their actual experiences. Garnering these opinions was equally as important to this research as was identifying specific examples of capital in their experiences because those opinions helped to establish an understanding of what happens when Black and Latino students pursue Ph.D.s at PWIs. What's important to note about each of these participants is that even though they each had a very sophisticated understanding of race/ethnicity, and class and how that impacted their experiences, they did not exaggerate the role it played and instead revealed the nuances of how these factors were evident in their experiences, particularly in graduate school. The interviews were structured in a way to develop a balanced discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of their experiences as doctoral students of color. As a result, each participant was candid about not only the challenges they confronted within their doctoral programs, but also their successes

and features of their doctoral process they appreciated. Those challenges and successes were layered within each section on the different types of capital formation.

### *SOCIAL CAPITAL*

“Social capital can be understood as networks of people and community resources. These peer and other social contacts can provide both instrumental and emotional support to navigate through society’s institutions” (Cited in Yosso, 2005, p. 79). Participation in Pre-Doctoral Prep Programs (P.P.Ps) was an instrumental factor in the formation of social capital for the second generation. During their sophomore or junior year of college, each participant submitted an extensive application, including a personal statement, to their programs of interest. Upon being accepted into these programs, each student was given opportunities to conduct scholarly research with the support of a faculty member. Participants also received financial support in the form of stipends, and they had access to various workshops relevant to the graduate school application process. The P.P.Ps worked to establish numerous communities of prospective doctoral students of color by also providing formal program activities designed to not only increase awareness about the doctoral process, but also to build networks among faculty mentors, and students. In some ways the informal social networks established by the first generation served as a paragon for the types of support established by the P.P.Ps. In addition to formal program activities created to foster networking, there were also other key figures that were equally as important in the second generation’s matriculation to graduate school.

Early on in her childhood Elvira knew that education was critical to her advancement because of the struggles she saw her parents encounter as migrant farm

workers. When she started college, the McNair program, and IRT (Institute for the Recruitment of Teachers) gave Elvira concrete skills and information about the process of applying to graduate school.

*It was McNair who prepared me and at least I kind of knew I had grad school a part of my vocabulary. But IRT made it a part of my life. We went there and it was like boot-camp...they made it like it was so naturalized...and they demystified it. And they made it sound so easy like you can get into any of these schools and they'll give you money to go to school, they'll give you a fellowship. Which was also a new idea to go beyond the undergrad B.A. and get a Ph.D. is like wow, so they really did so much. And they continue to do that as far as keeping in touch with people with at least knowing that there are other students who are in the same process as you.*

Elvira's involvement in a P.P.P. also allowed her to broaden her understanding and experiences with diversity once she entered graduate school. The diverse network of peers she encountered served as a conduit for building social capital because she was able to build partnerships with other students of color and bond around common struggles.

*Grad school has actually been my most significant experience with diversity because I feel like I've met so many different people from different parts of the country, and different kinds of Mexicans, different kinds of Black people. From where I was all Mexicans were like first generation Mexican Americans. Our parents were all like from the same three states in Mexico. We all had a very specific kind of life, and here it's like I've met 5<sup>th</sup> generation people from*

*Colorado, people from Arizona, like the Southwest. Which the Southwest is still sort of a mystery to me, so just like within this own like Mexican American group it's kind of expanded because I've met so many different people. You also realize that we're not all the same right. And also meeting, one of my very good friends is from Atlanta... and to understand that sort of experience and how she understands her experiences as an African American woman. To kind of learn from that it's really been kind of transformative for me to understand that. It's also interesting to see how many similarities we can draw from that based on our understandings of white racism or white supremacy based on our understandings of class and also our positions in our department and how with the kind of work that we're trying to do and how we see our finishing this degree. And I think that might lead to other questions about like how do I cope and navigate.*

Developing coping strategies and tips for navigation were significant outcomes of Elvira's diverse network of peers. The types of social capital that McNair and IRT provided were able to equip Elvira with solid knowledge, solid confidence, and a solid network. Equipping students of color with the confidence needed to seriously pursue a Ph.D. was a critical asset of the programs that the second generation participated in. Similar to Elvira's experiences, the P.P.P that Cross Damon was involved in during undergraduate also introduced him to the option of graduate school.

Like some of the first generation participants, Cross first learned about the various options for graduate school from his undergraduate advisor during his

freshman year of college. *“That was the first time someone had ever mentioned going to graduate school for something other than a teaching degree.”* Once Cross’s advisor gave him information about the MMUF (Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship) program he was immediately inspired to pursue a Ph.D.

*Also just knowing graduate school was an option...because growing up like I said nobody really went to graduate school unless it was for a teaching degree...so just finding out what my options were and that there were people who were encouraging. And... there was this whole world of people who didn’t look at me strangely for doing what I really love to do.*

Had it not been for the support of his advisor, and the knowledge and tools he garnered from the MMUF program, Cross would not have attended graduate school. *“The Mellon program is the reason why I’m in grad school today...and my Mellon mentor.”* Although the support provided by the Mellon program equipped Cross with a network of doctoral students of color at other institutions, it could not prevent him from experiencing moments of alienation and isolation at his home institution. During his first year of graduate school he struggled to fit in with the white students in his department.

*My first year I was trying to fit in...all I had was the only other black person but she didn’t hang out because she didn’t smoke or drink, which pretty much meant what hanging out meant for the rest of my cohort. So I tried to hang out and do the whole smoking and drinking thing and it didn’t work out too well because I still wasn’t getting what I needed socially. We listened to different music. We had different taste in things. It was just like*

*trains passing in the night. If we couldn't talk about anything that was school related there really wasn't much to talk about.*

Although Cross was unable to form a solid network of support among the white students in his department, he was able to transform his negative experiences. He eventually gained support from the only other Black student in his department at the time, and they went on to get married. When other Black students later arrived in his department he and his wife were able to provide advice to them about how to navigate through the department.

*We were kind of like the ones who told them who to talk to, who not to talk to, who was slightly racist or sexist, how to interpret the way certain professors' behaved towards them, the way students were acting. Some of it was just basic stuff like where to get a decent hair cut or where to go to church.*

Providing inside tips on faculty racism proved to be a vital tool for both the second generation and the first generation. Those sorts of guarded and private conversations were instrumental in establishing a pipeline of social capital that effectively enabled those students to maneuver through potentially hostile spaces. Unlike Cross, Cherie was fortunate enough to have a solid group of peers from her P.P.P. that went on to attend the same graduate university as she did.

Starting graduate school with a network of peers was extremely beneficial for Cherie because in many ways she had a built in support system even though they all may have not been in the same department.

*When I finished the program there were two of us that went to Recruit University. It was good in the fact that you had networking...so it wasn't like*

*you were starting graduate school in a completely foreign place and didn't know anyone, at least for me. Not everyone had another McNair fellow that went to the same school as them, but there were two of us that went to Recruit University. So that was helpful so when we first got there we could all kind of lean on each other.*

Beyond helping to form pre-established networks of students, the stability that McNair provided to Cherie as an undergraduate also equipped her with a supportive faculty mentor. Cherie's mentor was integral in helping her identify her research interests and gathering the tools needed to seriously pursue advanced research. In addition to the McNair program, attending an HBCU also empowered Cherie to pursue graduate school.

*Howard definitely did...when I came to Howard it made me want to do great things and I was really pumped...it was the first time that I was at a school that was all Black and everybody wanted you to do well and I never felt like that before. I always felt like I had to prove myself and I didn't have to do that at Howard, and I think that's why I really wanted to be a historian.*

For Cherie, being amongst other Blacks students at a Black institution helped her to realize her self-worth and her intellectual capabilities. The powerful influence that positive communities of color provide is undeniable. This notion shines through particularly in Cherie's case because she came from an upper-middle class family where she was exposed to advanced degrees early on in her life when her mother went on to pursue and complete her Ph.D. while Cherie was still a child. As evinced in the findings presented from the first generation and the second generation, positive



affirmations were one of the most important forms of social capital utilized in building the pipeline of Black and Latino scholars.

Juan was first introduced to McNair by a group of his peers. Their positive peer pressure influenced him to apply for the program. Initially the lure of receiving funding to do research was one of the most enticing aspects of the program for Juan. However, once he was accepted into the program he had an opportunity to participate in numerous activities that helped to build his understanding of graduate school and the steps needed to obtain a Ph.D.

*So I learned about the program through my peers...they were doing it. We had to go to the seminars and the seminars were about your first year in graduate school, how to find a mentor, how to apply to graduate school, taking the GRE, etc.... You also had to start independent research with a faculty member and get credit for it. So I had to work with a faculty member, and that was really hard.*

In addition to seminars and workshops, having advanced graduate students and faculty members share their experiences and strategies was one of the most beneficial aspects of the program.

*A lot of the things I learned from graduate school... I honestly had a small glimpse of that through McNair. We had graduate students come in and tell us about the first year of grad school and how there's two sets of students that read all the time and the ones who only read half the reading. That's so true. Stuff like that was very valuable. We had faculty members telling us how the institution you pick should nurture. And they were telling us to think*

*about it and to prepare yourself for the journey. Mentally preparing yourself was very beneficial.*

The small snapshot of graduate school that Juan received from the faculty and graduate students was extremely valuable because he was able to enter graduate school without blinders. By sharing their experiences they exposed Juan to many of the unwritten rules and standards of graduate school. Sharing knowledge is an important component of building and forming social capital. When there are positive role models to share knowledge and exemplify success it bolsters and reinforces *community cultural wealth* for students of color in particular.

#### ***NAVIGATIONAL CAPITAL***

“Navigational capital refers to skills of maneuvering through social institutions. Historically, this infers the ability to maneuver through institutions not created with Communities of Color in mind” (Yosso, 2005, p. 80). Social networks and mentorships proved to be the most powerful form of navigational capital employed by the second generation. Each participant was very candid about not only identifying what they considered to be the most important tools in graduate school, but they were also forthcoming about if and how they acquired those tools for themselves during their matriculation. Much like the first generation, the forms of navigational capital utilized by the second generation could also be interpreted as forms of social capital. Within the context of this research what distinguishes navigational capital from social capital is “strategy.” The ways in which both the first generation and the second generation utilized their peer and faculty networks for

academic support and tips was an important strategy that enabled each of them to successfully maneuver through their classes, their departments, and their institutions.

When Elvira discussed the key strategies she felt were necessary for graduate school she identified financial support, mentorships, and peer networks both inside and outside of the academy.

*If you have a good mentor, they will guide you through all the informalities of the doctoral program that you find out through your peers...I think that you [should] have two or three friends in graduate school and then also a social network outside of graduate school. So first, a good friend in graduate school that will help you read your papers, give you good feedback...someone who you can work in collaboration with because it's so important to have a community. It's hard enough for a graduate student to do stuff outside of school, but if can try to have a couple of friends outside of the academic setting that would be really helpful. I think also financial support whether its grants, fellowships, or all the things that are mostly offered by the university because the larger fellowships are very hard to get...That would be the whole picture that I could see as far as something that would help students move along in the program.*

With the exception of having peer networks outside of the academy, Elvira had access to almost all of the key tools she felt were necessary for graduate school.

*I have access to a mentor that I am able to meet with frequently. She responds to me very quickly. She gives me a lot of advice, she spends a lot if time reading my papers, she gives me feedback on different things. So I think that*

*in itself, is very important. Because knowing how busy professors are, not everyone can give you time.*

In addition to having a mentor, Elvira also had access to a strong peer network among and financial support.

*I've had really good friends, really smart people to talk to and hang out with.*

*I've had that. The outside network, not so much...And financial support, well yes I've had just a regular fellowship. I've had some support from the graduate school and from my department to travel to conferences. So far I think overall I feel like I've been really supported here.*

The strategic relationships Elvira formed with her mentor and her peers were pivotal because they each provided a different sort of guidance. When asked about what were the most useful things to her as a student of color, she replied: *"My colleagues...I've learned more outside of class than inside of class. I guess that's been what keeps me here."* As evinced by Elvira's experiences, peer networks with other students of color, as a form of capital can in some instances be a tool for retention.

The MMUF program was a large source of capital for Cross because they actively worked to support program participants not only during undergraduate years, but also once they entered graduate school. One way in particular they provided support for doctoral students of color was in the form of annual conferences. The MMUF conferences were an extraordinary source of navigational capital for Cross not only because it was a safe space to speak openly about one's experiences as a student of color, but also because several practical strategies for coursework, proposal development, and dissertation writing were also shared.

*The Mellon conferences are great...I went to the one this summer and the topic was diversity and it hit a lot of the issues I was dealing with in my department and me trying to figure out how to deal with that. It was also useful because I'm about to go write my dissertation proposal and they had a panel of former grad students who had just finished their dissertation and listening to them about what it took and dissertation survival strategies...and talking with people who are now faculty and people who are about to do the same thing I'm about to do. It was just a great recharge to be in a place where you don't have to constantly justify the kind of work you do. Where I am they're pretty open-minded and they try to be sensitive and you can sometimes see them trying...but the whole feel of it is 'aren't you through with the race thing...isn't the race thing over' but it was never really a race thing, this is who I am...I'm studying myself. It was just very comforting not to have to go through the whole justification rigmarole.*

The comfort of being within a non-judgmental space surrounded by other students of color actively pursuing doctorates was revitalizing for Cross because he could share his personal experiences and his research interests without skepticism. In addition to the Mellon conferences, he also had some faculty support within his department. Interestingly though, Cross mentioned that even though his departmental advisor was a Black male, the two mentors in his department that he received the most guidance from were white women.

*They're the type of mentors that give me enough room to do my own thing, to explore my own issues, and to talk to them about it. But they've also given me*

*this framework that isn't quite African American studies, but isn't quite something totally different either. And they're honest, which just talking to some other graduate students, can be hard to find anywhere. So they're honest with me about my writing. They're honest with me about department politics. They're honest with me about politics in the field in general, in academia in general. So sometimes it feels like it's the Black man and the white women trying to take down white male patriarchy.*

Cross was able to garner support from his mentors because they worked to cultivate his growth as a scholar by supporting his research interests and exposing him to the politics of academia. When asked about what other strategies were necessary for a doctoral program, Cross identified spirituality and support networks as vital instruments.

*You have to have some sort of prayer life or spiritual life or yoga or something outside of graduate school that gives you some sort of identity and some sort of self worth, because if your life hinges on being a successful graduate student you might get crushed after the first session...and support...people to support you...it doesn't have to be a whole broad family it could be one person that gives you a kind word every now and then.*

Strategies for building one's self-worth are also important tactics needed to successfully maneuver through a doctoral program, particularly because within the space of academia intellectual and scholarly endeavors require constant evaluation and critique.

Like Elvira and Cross, Cherie also recognized the benefits of having a support network and how that has helped her personally succeed in graduate school. When discussing her relationships with the other Black students in her department she shared the following:

*We do try to support each other. In my department, once a month, we have dinners and it's about maybe seven of us total (actually on campus)...the dinners usually last on average for four hours and we complain and we gripe and we're each other's therapy, each other's coaches and encouragement. And that helps me get through...we network in our own way to help each other out...the university didn't tell us to do that, the university doesn't set you up with a mentor...they set up first years with fourth years who could help you navigate the system better. That's something that we did for ourselves to help us all get out.*

Much like the first generation, Cherie was a part of an established system of accountability where by each student was their brother or sister's keeper. Developing a system of support in which each person is held accountable for their peers is an extremely powerful technique that helped to create a strong sense of community among the Black students in Cherie's department.

*I would say the most useful thing in my department is my other Black colleagues. If I had to do it alone, I would cry every day. I'd have to say it's them because they keep things light hearted, they keep me up. We have fun. They can look at my work and I can look at theirs and we don't have to have a*

*fear of competitiveness or...we just celebrate each other and it's very, very hard to be celebrated among white people.*

Although Cherie was not as close to her white peers, she still maintained a cordial relationship with them for the sake of building future partnerships.

*I don't have problems with my white colleagues I think that they're great ... but I know that there's this gap... there's this wall. I know that we'll only understand each other to a point. ..we just don't have very much in common...and that's not with all white people because I have friends that are white and they're like sisters and brothers, but with colleagues it's a little bit different because you just don't know how competitive you should be... you just don't know how much you say will be used against you for something in the future, especially when you're applying for grants or jobs or things that get very competitive. So I keep them at a distance, but I keep them close because I also know that I need to have them like me to an extent because all of us are going to be colleagues down the road...*

Unlike the first generation, Cherie felt the need to maintain positive relations with her white colleagues as a purposeful tactic to ensure that she did not isolate herself from future information or alliances. Faculty support was also a source of navigational capital for Cherie. She maintained a solid relationship with her McNair mentor and she developed a strong mentorship with her academic advisor.

*My advisor is awesome. He's been more than I expected because I know that he's very busy and has a ton of students. He would find clippings about John Brown and leave them in my mailbox to look at. He would give me drafts of*



*books coming out...I was not used to a professor that would give so much and give access and be willing to really care about my project. I feel like I matter and that means something because I didn't want to just be another student or another number or another paper he looks at. He really looks at it, he gives great feedback and he wants you to succeed. He wants you to be successful.*

Obtaining a genuine level of support and engagement from faculty were important factors in establishing mentor relationships for Cherie, Elvira, and Cross.

Mentorship and funding were also the two prevailing factors that Juan felt were needed to successfully pursue and complete a Ph.D.

*Mentorship and funding are the two main ones. You could be not that dedicated to the Ph.D., but if you have a mentor that is on top of you and pressuring you, not so much pressuring you, but encouraging you to submit stuff and giving you ideas, telling you to write stuff down and following up with you... you'll finish.*

Like Cherie, Juan identified multiple mentors that contributed to his success. He also maintained a strong relationship with his McNair mentor upon entering graduate school. His dissertation chair, a white male faculty member, also served in the capacity of a mentor.

*Then there is my dissertation chair and he's also my mentor. He gives me feedback. I told him from the beginning that I was interested in being his student. He said give me a proposal. He tore it up and used a red kamikaze pen. Before he gave it to me he said that 'some students get really mad when*

*they see so many red marks.’ And so he gave it to me on like a Tuesday and by Wednesday I was working on it, and by Thursday I gave him a new draft and he was really impressed. So ever since then he has invested in me and made sure that if I need letters for anything he’s like right on it...I know I can count on him.*

Juan succeeded at building navigational capital from his mentor relationships because he was open and receptive to feedback. By staying committed to his work and the relationships he formed with various faculty members, Juan was able to expeditiously advance through each stage of his doctoral program.

*I told him I want to finish in five years, which is unheard of for anthropology Ph.D.s, and he was like, ‘Okay, here’s what we are going to do, pick a project.’ Out of all the three projects I had my advisor said, ‘All three sound great, pick one.’ ...After I decided on one, my advisor said, ‘Ok, do a literature review and bring it to me in a month.’ So I was in the library every day doing the literature review. And then I brought it to him and he said to start writing my prospectus. I finished it the following semester, and that was fine.*

Mentor relationships are an important form of navigational capital, because if genuine support is provided and the mentee is attentive and responsive to that support, they can in turn make several academic and personal strides.

### **ASPIRATIONAL CAPITAL**

“Aspirational capital refers to the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future even in the face of real and perceived barriers” (Yosso, 2005, p. 77). Race, racism, prejudice, and discrimination each still play active roles in American society

including the spaces of higher education. Like the first generation, many of the second generation participants experienced moments of marginalization within their graduate programs. Even when those moments were not blatant racial confrontations, there were perceived barriers centered around race that manifested within their experiences sometimes in the form of stereotype threat, self-doubt, and extreme internal pressures to do well and always go “the extra mile.” Despite those “real and perceived” barriers each of them relied on a currency of hope to help them weather some of the many storms they encountered.

For Cross, the transition from the safe spaces of an HBCU to the exclusive and sometimes racially insensitive walls of a P.W.I proved to be a challenge for him during his first semester.

*Went from...like an all black class where pretty much every course focused, at least in part, on something African American even Brit lit in a way...to pretty much having to almost force the stuff I was interested in into the conversation. It's like being in a position in undergrad where everything was almost familiar to almost everybody. We had different experiences from regions, and class, and gender differences and all that stuff...but we could talk about the same movie, we listened to the same music just about, we were interested in some of the same issues...Graduate school was completely different. It was like having to learn a different language that first semester.*

Part of the challenge that Cross encountered in his department was a drastic change in culture and climate. During one class discussion about the controversial film *The*

*Birth of a Nation* several ignorant remarks were made invalidating the notion of racism that made Cross feel uncomfortable.

*I was in Southern Lit class and we were talking about Birth of a Nation in the classroom and one of the white students was like... 'why are the people taking these myths so seriously'. And coming from Mississippi and the Civil Rights Movement was only 40 years ago I couldn't believe that he could sit up there and call blatant racism a myth and then question why people take it so seriously as if it was something in the distant past that I'm bringing up for the sake of bringing up, rather than something that was a really pressing issue for a lot of people. That was one of those moments when I was like 'oh, I'm in a different world now.'*

In addition to racial climate concerns, the cryptic theory and vocabulary used by the faculty and students also became a source of exclusion.

*Part of it was everybody it seemed like in class discussion everybody wanted to show off how much theory they knew...and I was kind of sort of familiar with theory but not really, and then it seemed like everybody was talking out of some sort of a SAT or GRE book instead of plain language at least I could understand. In undergrad it was pretty valid to bring in personal experience, especially when you're talking about literature. But when I got to graduate school it seemed pretty taboo, at least that first semester or two it was like I couldn't rely on experience to translate some of what I was trying to say. I had to throw out some quote from Derrida or something...instead of something I could get in in two or three words.*

Cross's methods for understanding theory were in many ways invalidated because the classroom spaces in his department were not always culturally inclusive and receptive to methods of learning that did not fit the white norm already established. Despite those moments of exclusion, Cross prevailed because of the knowledge and confidence the MMUF program had given him. When obstacles or moments of self-doubt loomed, he could reflect on the narratives of previous scholars of color as a way to stay steadfast towards his goals. *"The main thing those programs gave me was confidence and basic skills. When everything started to seem like it was starting to fall apart, I could easily remember that I know people who have done this stuff...it's doable."*

Cherie's first year of graduate school was also riddled with some of the same challenges that Cross encountered. Even with the confidence that she built from her experiences at Howard and as a participant in McNair, her initial experiences still left her with some self-doubts.

*My first year was horrible because... I thought for some reason graduate school would be easy...I was like class is only once a week, cool...So I only had class twice a week and I was thinking this is going to be cake. Plus I was coming from Howard and Howard is kind of like a double-edged sword in that you come with this great amount of confidence and you feel like 'yes I'm a leader'...that energy you feel about being great...and when I got into the classroom and saw I was the only Black woman, I was kind of like woo...I remember the professors the very first day she started talking about all of these books and themes and I was like what is she talking about...and*

*it was almost like she was speaking in a completely different language, it mine as well have been Japanese because I had no idea. Then I looked down and saw that she was reading from the syllabus.*

In addition to confronting what she considered to be a language barrier, the lack of culturally relevant curriculum materials was also a major challenge for Cherie.

*“Second semester was worse because I was taking a class where I felt like the literature was pointless. Everything we read I did not, I could not use in anyway. For me it was very European centered literature and there was never a clear understanding as to why we were reading this.”* Compounded with each of those obstacles, Cherie also struggled with the pressure to do well because she was the only Black woman in many of her classes.

*It made me feel worse because I was the only Black woman. I felt like if I don't do well or if I walk out or if I'm an embarrassment then I'm an embarrassment to everyone across the board and any other Black woman that tries to come in before or after... Most difficult for me is feeling like I have to do well because my community depends on me. I have to do well because I'm impacting the way they look at the next Black woman that comes in...or I have to do well because I constantly feel like, in those statistics in the next few years I'll be in that number...and I want to make my number matter so that it's not just oh you're just another Black doctorate in the bunch, but wow you're a Black doctorate, this is what you've done, this is what you're doing, this is how she's going to open up the door for more Blacks to come in. I just feel a pressure to do well, and I think that's why*

*I'm so self-conscious about my writing. I really get on myself about make it good make it great, because I feel like everything has to be in order for me to get recognized, in order for me to win some sort of award or get published I have to be twice as good as the white students without a question, I have to be. If I'm going to get tenure I have to get twice as many publications. I have to create a situation where there is no way for them to tell you no, there's no way for them to reject you because your work just is.*

The traditional pressures that characterize doctoral education were heightened for Cherie because she was very self-conscious about creating a positive portrayal of herself in order to dispel any myths that might have been associated with her race and gender. Her angst is a prime example of what Claude Steele (2002) calls “stereotype threat”.

It is a situational threat...Where bad stereotypes about these groups apply, members of these groups fear being reduced to that stereotype...Negative stereotypes about women and African Americans bear on important academic abilities. Thus, for members of these groups who are identified with domains in which these stereotypes apply, the threat of these stereotypes can be sharply felt and, in several ways, and hampers their achievement (Steele, 2002, p. 337).

Failure however was not an option for Cherie. After her first year, she persisted in spite of the initial challenges she faced, and was able to master the system of graduate school.

*After the first year ended then I felt a little bit better kind of like I survived it, but I did not like the impression that I felt like I had given the majority of my professors because I felt like I was still writing like a journalist and not a historian. I was still making it, but it was just the way I thought about history was just way different than other people think about history. I felt like I had difficulty understanding different things, but then once I figured out the language that they were using and the culture of the department after the first year I was like ‘oh ok, I get it.’ This is how we talk about things, this is how books should be read, and this is what we’re discussing. And my second year was so much easier.*

Resiliency helped to combat the academic misgivings Cherie developed when she first entered her graduate program.

Another barrier that was evident in the experiences of some of the first generation and second generation participants was the process of having to prove one’s academic abilities in order to get faculty support. Walter, Cherie, and Juan each shared experiences in which they had to do additional work in order to garner the respect and support of certain faculty members in their respective departments. In Juan’s case, the faculty member that he wanted to be his mentor initially told him no.

*I asked him to be my mentor and he said ‘no.’ Mr. A. said ‘Why don’t you go to the library and read all of my books and stuff that I published?’ I blocked off the weekend and I did that. And I went back and I told him what I learned. I was like, ‘I read all your books and articles.’ He was like, ‘Really, what exactly interested you?’ ... So that’s how he became my*



*mentor...he decided to be my mentor and he's still my mentor now, and he's on my dissertation committee now.*

In this particular situation, other students may have shirked the additional responsibility and moved on to find another mentor. However, Juan immediately tackled the challenge and expeditiously completed the additional work. His level of commitment and motivation enabled him to triumph over the additional barriers placed in his way.

### ***RESISTANT CAPITAL***

“Resistant capital refers to knowledge and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality. This form of capital is grounded in the legacy of resistance to subordination exhibited by Communities of Color” (Yosso, 2005, p. 80). Resistant capital in the experiences of the second generation was hinged more on radical viewpoints instead of oppositional behaviors. They each had a keen awareness of the ways in which race/ethnicity, and class impact graduate education for students of color. That awareness was transformed into capital because it kept each of them grounded and connected to their histories. They may not have been connected to a massive movement like the Civil Rights movement as Deborah noted, but they understood the struggles that afforded them the opportunity to pursue doctorates as Black and Latino students. So even though there may or may have not been actual instances of formal social activism, their viewpoints were equally considered as forms of resistant capital.

Each participant was asked their opinion concerning what distinguishes the experiences of students of color versus white students when pursuing a Ph.D. Elvira

mentioned that Black and Latino students face numerous obstacles throughout the educational pipeline that impact if, how, and when they enter graduate school. And when they make it into those spaces against all odds that is what makes their experiences unique.

*If you have a group of students, obviously Black and Latino students who grew up in impoverished conditions and faced all sorts of racism, to have a person like that come to graduate school and contribute and have that person be a part of your class, I think it's such a unique experience and situation. I think that alone is unique. Being in an institution that historically and continues to be majority white and then from the hood being in graduate school, some people say that is a miracle. It continues to be a rarity. Not to put students like myself on display, but because we come from this very different background, we are on display all the time. I think that affects how we're seen and how we operate in the world. So yeah, that makes it unique.*

She also identified white privilege as a feature that distinguishes Black and Latino students from their white counterparts. Some white students, regardless of class, have a sense of entitlement, whereas many Black and Latino students believe they made it because of serendipity.

*Some white students can say 'I grew up working class and I went to college,' which is true, but I think the difference is the social and psychological wages of whiteness...if you understand and perceive yourself to be white, you have a different set of expectations and entitlement that I don't think many students of*

*color understand or take on as their own. Some of us may think that we are here by luck or because we were the talented tenth.*

Research shows that many students of color attribute their academic success to luck (Cuádras, 2002; Bray 2002). In addition to luck, Elvira also noted that the learning process is different because many Black and Latino students build capital through many informal networks and conversations that happen by chance.

*And it's the ways that we learn. We learn about these small interactions, cultural resources, and capital that we just pick up in seminar. And we're like we might need to get one of those recorders or we might need to hit somebody up for an internship. And that's all done informally. So it is very unique. We don't have anybody that we know that works for the government that is in a position of power and has a pool of money that we can inherit, even property. Most of the people I know don't have any property and don't know how to plan your finances, how to buy a house... all those things that are very much of a part of whiteness.*

Elvira was able to transform her views into her research and within the courses she taught. *"This is the work that I am engaging in, this is social justice work. I teach a class on race, class, and gender and that has a social justice message. I think it's a very big part of who I am, though I don't consider myself an activist."* By exposing her students to the nuances of race, class, and gender she actively shaped her own form of resistance.

Cherie shared similar sentiments with Elvira, as she also cited white privilege and entitlement as major factors that distinguished the experiences of white students versus Black students.

*I would agree in that obtaining a Ph.D. is hard. It's not cake for anyone. It's very, very difficult. White, Brown, Asian, it does not matter it's a difficult process. But I think it is unique for African American students because there is a history behind them that white people don't have to grapple with. No one ever told white people that they were inferior. No one ever told a white person that this is not for you, or that you are not allowed. They don't have that history and for Black people and for Brown people there's a clear history of racism, a clear history of oppression. Where as white people...grow up knowing that they're at an advantage for being white, and it's a privilege that goes unspoken but it's nonetheless a privilege. People of color don't have that privilege.*

*We constantly have to prove yourself, constantly and that is something that is very unique to the experience that white people will not have to do. They worry about jobs and getting hired, but not in the same way that Black people worry about it because it's a constant fear that 'how are you getting this job, why are you getting this job' and 'are you being given a fair wage' as opposed to white people...Dealing with my students in the ivy league there's such a sense of entitlement. 'I deserve this; I'm this, my daddies such and such.' You just don't have that experience. I've met very, very few Black people that feel entitled like I should have this...we're happy to be here, we*

*want to do well. Give us an opportunity to do well and show ourselves and when we've done well give us the due praise that we deserve. That's what we ask for, we just ask for a fair shake. We're not asking for more money simply because we're Black...we're just saying the same things you do for Katie and John do for Keisha and Jamal.*

What really makes both Elvira and Cherie's views resistant capital is their strong, unforgiving acknowledgement of the racial disparities that they've witnessed while at a P.W.I. They both were very aware of the historical legacies of exclusion that have and continue to shape Black and Brown experiences in the U.S., and they used that awareness both as a tool of resistance and as a tool to navigate through their process.

From day one, racially insensitive remarks were prevalent during many of Cross's classroom experiences. During one class many of his opinions and thoughts were constantly devalued.

*The white professor in his opening introduction says I went to Berkeley and I studied African American lit but I couldn't get a job in African American lit as a white guy. That was his opening kind of introduction, hey how ya doing kind of thing, and it instantly made me feel kind of uncomfortable in the room because of course all eyes were on the two brown people in the room. And then through the course of the semester whenever I would make comments the professor would rephrase whatever I said but with a lot more complicated language with references to some reconstruction, post-structuralist theorist as if people couldn't understand what I was saying, and so he had to show me how I was supposed to say it as a professional.*

After experiencing several instances of passive marginalization in his classes, Cross began to fight back against the professor's antagonism. *"It was partly learning how to play the game, I suppose so by the end of the semester I picked up his sticks and started kind of shooting it back at him and kind of making fun of him in some sort of way."* Although Cross, used the language of the academy to combat the negative feedback he received in class, he ultimately decided to reject some of the white language norms of the academy. His most powerful act of resistance was his refusal to assimilate.

*After that first semester and a half I stopped trying to sound like the professors and the rest of the folks in my class because I realized it really wasn't me. And the stuff I was trying to accomplish and write about didn't need to be translated into somebody else's language. And I think I lost something in that process of trying to translate what I was thinking, seeing, experiencing into somebody else's language and the language from somebody else's experiences. I learned to trust my own instincts on a lot of things... I mean I found some of the stuff useful, and code-switching is always a useful tool to have in your bag, but I prefer my own southern dialect."*

By owning and valuing his own dialect and way of translating academic material, Cross was able to retain his academic identity and sense of intellect. In many of her experiences working within the white academy Audre Lorde (1984) promulgated the notion that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (p. 112). Cross's experiences are a clear reflection of this notion. His decision to disown the "master's tools" was a bold statement of resistance.

Of the four second generation participants, Juan was the one with the most traditional instance of social activism as a form of resistant capital. During his third year he took the initiative to write letters of concern to his department regarding the paucity of African American students enrolling in the program.

*Well last year I noticed that for two consecutive years there were no African Americans admitted in my department. Instead of being passive about it, and having a third year pass by with no African Americans I said you know, I need to be proactive. I sent out a letter to my friend, she was like my big sister in the department, and asked if she could look at it expressing the concern. I just wanted to circulate it among my friends. She said, 'No you should circulate it among the whole department, this is a concern for the entire department not just for a few people.' She said that I should send the letter to the Director of Graduate Studies and the chairman of the department; but it should be modified it to include not just African Americans but Mexican Americans too... It wasn't just a complaint anymore I had to list possible solutions. So I put: 1. Go to Mellon, McNair, and minority programs where you can publicize this topic. 2. Send out letters of interest to apply to departments that are traditionally African Americans or Latino. I had a list of things.*

Although Juan received mixed views from both the faculty and students in his department about the concerns he raised, his active approach to addressing racial inequalities exemplifies the notion of “oppositional behavior” promulgated within the resistance capital paradigm (Yosso, 2005).

## *CONCLUSION*

The narratives and counter-stories gathered from the second generation have revealed that there are several nuances that shape the experiences of Black and Latino doctoral students. The social capital that was formed through participation in P.P.P's like McNair and MMUF, helped to build confidence, support, and practical knowledge among the second generation. That confidence and support proved to be especially beneficial during moments when they may have encountered racial hostility, self-doubts, or fears within the classroom. Even when their confidence began to wane, their level of resiliency in the face of real and perceived barriers enabled them to foster aspirational capital. They also used the lessons learned and the networks formed through those programs to strategically navigate through the spaces of the academy, thus creating a strong bank of navigational capital. In the midst of each of their experiences, they still managed to each retain their own sense of identity by actively resisting certain norms and injustices they witnessed at their institutions.

In chapter five, a formal analysis comparing the experiences of both generations is undertaken. Several similarities and differences were identified and used to make assertions about the implications of this research as it pertains to the broader issue concerning the under-representation of Black and Latino doctoral students.



## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, ANALYSIS, AND CONCLUSION

### Graduate School

*The book not so big  
for you to get lost in the pages  
perhaps you don't find yourself in them  
cause they so thin  
and you so thick like buckwheat honey  
trust your footsteps  
trust your eyes and tongue  
start easy  
one or two sentences per class  
feel comfortable with the sound of your voice  
in a small room ten people one large table  
speak your heart they will hear  
hearts speak to each other  
even when minds don't listen  
walk with your neck showing  
and when afraid  
trust your footsteps  
trust your eyes and tongue  
they come from a long place long time  
if you can't find  
the root in your spine  
stand still and wait with your hand on a wall  
listen to its negotiations with gravity  
until you find the lava flow solid from your veins  
harden your back  
rise your throat and over  
then speak what you know without translation  
stand without negotiation  
and fight  
like your spirit already knows  
(Forman, 1998, p.16)*

## Introduction

Ruth Forman's poem *Graduate School* is an eloquent depiction of the graduate school experience as seen through the eyes of a person of color. At the heart of her poem she addresses the self-doubts and fears that sometimes consume students of color in graduate school. Repeatedly she uses the word "trust" to encourage each student to believe in themselves and their voices. This poem was apropos for the final chapter of this dissertation because of its message of empowerment. That sense of empowerment was something I witnessed not only among all of my participants but also within myself. Throughout my journey writing this dissertation, I constantly had to "trust" in my abilities, "trust" in my intellect, and "trust" in the legacy of other Black and Latino scholars that paved the way for me to pursue a Ph.D. In each generation's narratives I saw a piece of myself or an experience that I shared. Seeing those similarities was a source of empowerment, and for many of my second generation participants in particular, just having the opportunity to speak openly and candidly about their experiences was also empowering for them.

The purpose of this dissertation was to explore and compare the experiences of two different generations of Black and Latino scholars in order to better understand the historical phenomenon of their under-representation in doctoral education. When I set out to investigate this issue I knew that I did not want to design a study centered around a deficit model of thinking about their experiences or academic abilities. Instead I wanted the focus to be on understanding what tools they utilized while in graduate school, and how race and identity impacted their experiences. I constructed a theoretical lens that would enable me to flesh out the nuances of their experiences at

predominantly white institutions and the strategies they employed to navigate through those spaces. CRT and LatCRT were ideal theoretical paradigms to frame this research because of the emphasis on experiential knowledge and historical context. “CRT and LatCrit recognize that the experiential knowledge of people of color is legitimate and critical to understanding racial inequality...experiential knowledge is viewed as an asset, a form of community memory, a source of empowerment and strength, and not as a deficit” (Villalpando, 2004, p. 46). Both theories validated the use of student voices as a means to understand and draw conclusions about the role of race in higher education. Furthermore, “CRT and LatCrit challenge ahistoricism in higher education research, policy, and practice...CRT and LatCrit call for a deeper understanding of the historical factors that have affected and continue to affect their lives and educational experiences” (Villalpando, 2004, p. 47). This component was particularly significant in the construction of this research because it allowed me to identify several of the historical factors that impacted the first generation of scholars and whether or not those same factors were present within the experiences of the second generation.

Throughout chapters three and four, informal moments of analysis were presented among the findings. However, an in-depth look at the significance of those findings will be conducted in this chapter. In order to develop a more formal discussion and analysis, this chapter is split into two halves. In part one, an extensive discussion of the similarities and differences in capital formation, and the culture and climate of each generation’s institutions is undertaken. In part two, the implications of this research particularly as it pertains to the issue of under-representation are

explored. In addition, the limitations of this study are also discussed and several recommendations for change and future research are suggested.

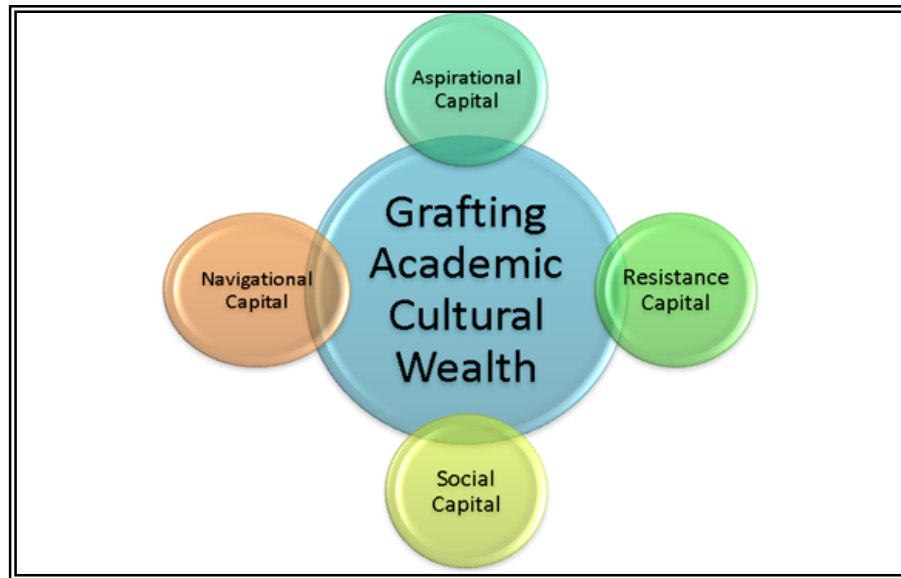
### ***PART ONE: DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS***

Using Affirmative Action as the backdrop to define the cultural landscape of higher education for both generations of my participants was beneficial because I was able to contextualize their experiences in relation to the policies and programs that first initiated the increased inclusion of minority populations in predominantly white institutions. The evolution of those policies and programs and the ever-changing commitment to maintaining them, has had a noticeable impact on the culture and climate of numerous institutions. “In many ways the historical vestiges of segregated schools and colleges continue to affect the climate for racial/ethnic diversity on college campuses” (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 2002, p. 673). With that in mind, when I created my research questions, I sought to create a level of inquiry that could address the role of culture and climate in the educational experiences of Black and Latino students over the course of two different time periods. My research question, “how is the current culture and climate of doctoral education at predominantly white institutions similar or different with the culture and climate during the late 1960s-1970s?,” was designed to address how institutional practices around race shape school environments, and how those environments are interpreted by marginalized bodies. “While many institutions are still contending with issues of diversifying their campus enrollments, more campuses need information to help them address the psychological and behavioral dimensions of the climate” (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 2002, p. 681). Understanding

climate is equally important to consider in the factors that contribute to underrepresentation at the doctoral level. My other research questions: “How are the experiences of current (second generation) Black and Latino doctoral students at predominantly white institutions similar or different with those of first generation Black and Latino scholars that pursued doctorates during the 1960s-1970s?” and “What forms of social and cultural capital are utilized in their experiences and how do they compare over time?” were constructed in order to develop a sophisticated understanding of the trends that have characterized the graduate experience for doctoral students of color.

Critical Race Theory and Latino Critical Race Theory were also extremely useful as a methodology because it enabled me as a researcher to create the space needed for each generation to speak without inhibitions. When their counter-narratives began to unfold, I used Yosso’s (2005) *community cultural wealth framework* to present my findings because it made it easier for me to compare and contrast their experiences. As a result, it allowed me to more clearly see various themes, similarities, and digressions across generations. The four key forms of capital that I identified as the most salient within the experiences of my first generation and second generation participants were: social capital, navigational capital, aspirational capital, and resistance capital. Because those were the most pervasive forms of capital, a new vision of Yosso’s (2005) framework emerged that more clearly spoke to the specific experiences of doctoral education for communities of color. I reinterpreted and renamed the model of *community cultural wealth* to “grafting academic cultural wealth” (figure 1.) in order to create a cycle that more accurately

addressed these differences and the ways in which each of those four forms of capital combined to create a sustained system of academic wealth that was bequeathed from one generation to the next. However it's important to note that the narratives that I identified that fit within each of those categories were not independent of one another. "These various forms of capital are not mutually exclusive or static, but rather are dynamic processes that build on one another as part of community cultural wealth" (Yosso, 2005, p. 77). By framing my findings within those forms of capital, there were immediately several similarities across and within the generations that emerged. The three primary similarities that I will focus on are: peer networks, mentorships, and persistence. In addition to similarities, the framework also revealed several generational differences. The three primary differences that I identified were: social activism, formal graduate preparation, and academic challenges/self-doubt. Other patterns that emerged included: culturally relevant research interests; generation gaps among the first generation and second generation; and migrant-farm worker backgrounds among the Latino participants. As a researcher I expected to find several experiences that were unique to one racial/ethnic group over another, but in my findings I did not discover numerous distinctions beyond what's discussed under the sections "social activism" and "migrant farm worker backgrounds."



**Figure 1 Grafting Academic Cultural Wealth**

*Similarities Across Generations*

**Peer Networks**

The formation of peer networks with other students of color was by far one of the most prevailing themes that emerged within the experiences of both generations. The development of those networks created various forms of both social capital and navigational capital. The primary benefits of Black and Latino peer networks were that they created sacred spaces for those students. Those spaces were vital for my participants because they permitted each of them to actively engage in critical, cultural dialogues and exchanges without judgment or harm. In Beverly D. Tatum's (1997) framework for racial identity development she explores why certain cultural spaces are beneficial for students of color at white institutions in particular. "Having a place to be rejuvenated and to feel anchored in one's cultural community increases the possibility that one will have the energy to achieve academically" (Tatum, 1997,

p. 80). In the findings from my participants there were several cultural exchanges around numerous issues.

When new Black students entered Cross's department, he was able to share information about where to get a hair-cut or find a Black church. For María, bonding with another student about growing up in the Barrio was significant because they could openly discuss the cultural clash around class dynamics that they encountered at Hallmark. *"As a friend of mine who was an undergraduate, that grew up in the Barrio of California said, and I'll always remember this 'After being at Hallmark, I can no longer shop at K-Mart for clothes'."* Elvira engaged in similar conversations with other Chicano students from different generations and regions of the country. She was also able to discuss common struggles against oppression with many of her Black peers in her department. Like Elvira, Juan engaged in several cultural exchanges with African American students when he participated in a campus organization that was geared towards students of color but mostly dominated by Black students. *"I joined the steering committee which is pretty much the board that does all the activities. They ended up being really nice, so now I find myself with a lot of African American friends."* Walter engaged in cultural exchanges about African and African American ethics with a colleague who later became his mentor. The monthly dinners that Cherie and her peers held became a site for them to vent about the climate of their department. Each of the cultural spaces utilized facilitated numerous cultural conversations that were not subject to the scrutiny of white peers or faculty and devoid of any embarrassment or humiliation. Robin D.G Kelly's (1994) examination of the formation of community and resistance among the Black



working class of the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century is also a useful lens to explain the benefits of cultural space.

During the era of Jim Crow, black working people carved out social space free from the watchful eye of white authority...These social spaces constituted partial refuge from the humiliations and indignities of racism, class pretensions, and wage work, and in many cases they housed an alternative culture that placed more emphasis on collectivist values, mutuality, and fellowship” (Kelly, 1994, p. 36).

Like the Black working class social spaces of the Jim Crow era, the peer networks of the first generation and second generation Black and Latino participants provided refuge from white ridicule, and helped to cultivate shared cultural practices and ideologies.

As Tatum (1997) has noted, those cultural spaces also contribute to academic success. In addition to cultural exchanges, knowledge exchanges were also important. Many of my participants received or shared academic information that greatly contributed to their successful navigation through their departments. For example, both María and Cherie received important information from their peers about how to pass their oral exams. María’s peers bequeathed several notes that were beneficial in helping her to prepare for her exams. In Cherie’s case, when she repeatedly failed her French comprehensive exam, another peer in her department suggested that there was bias in the grading of Black student’s exams. He suggested that she take an additional course in French conversation to help her pass.

*And I went to one of my colleagues and I was like what do I have to do to pass this test and he was telling me that every Black person who has ever taken the French exam has struggled with it and they were saying that they think that it's shady the way that they do the grading... And so he was like I'm just going to take a translation class and I hear that if you take this class it will help you to pass. So I took the class, took the exam right after, and passed.*

Sharing information about professors who may be racist or biased was also an important exchange among Carlos and Cross's peers as well. Deborah's group of peers often met to review the readings required for class and to discuss strategies for how to participate in certain class discussions. Similarly, Elvira was able to build stronger learning communities with her peers outside of class than within. The opportunity to learn from her peers without white spectatorship was a large source of motivation for Elvira.

Each of my participants' peer networks fulfilled different needs for them through cultural exchanges and through providing academic support by sharing knowledge and strategies. Most importantly those networks created esoteric spaces of support that were sacred and in some ways incapable of penetration by white 'outsiders'. The practice of creating and sustaining a group of peers of similar racial or ethnic backgrounds is also practiced by white students as well, but sometimes without the stigma that's associated with Black or Latino peer groups (Tatum 1997). However, what CRT and LatCRT have done is provided a framework that facilitates the growth of counter-stories in an effort to expose experiences in higher education that are often times marginalized and criticized. "As a form oppositional scholarship,

CRT challenges the experience of White European Americans as the normative standard” (Parker, 2003, p. 149). As evidenced by the similarities found across both generations of participants, the formation of capital through support and sharing knowledge is not a new habit formed by Black and Latino communities but instead a practice that has occurred for many decades (MacDonald, 2004; Orr, 1999).

However, despite the pattern of support, and the benefits that racially conscious peer networks and organizations provide specifically for students of color, battles to dismantle some of these formal organizations are being waged in the face of Affirmative Action dismemberment. In the state of Arizona, for example state legislatures have initiated a bill that would completely eliminate race based student organizations.

Students attending Arizona’s public schools, community colleges and universities may be restricted from operating race-based organizations on campus following a proposal recently approved by a state legislative panel...the measure would prohibit the operation of student groups such as the Black Business Students Association (BBSA) at Arizona State University, Native Americans United at Northern Arizona University and other organizations ‘based in whole or in part on race-based criteria’. (Forde, 2008, para.1 & 2)

Opposition to the inclusion of cultural spaces for students of color will only work to further demoralize their presence within PWIs. The model of HBCUs provides a clear example of how to construct cultural spaces and why they are important. “They offer a setting in which black consciousness and expressions of racial pride are not

met with threats or hostility, and demonstrate one of the few organizational arenas of racial integration at the level of their faculties” (Willie, 2003, p.81). In addition to the similarities found in peer networks, there were also similarities in mentor relationships across generations.

### **Mentor Relationships**

Recent research conducted by Nettles & Millet (2006) found that mentor relationships are significant in the socialization process in graduate school for all students regardless of color. Their definition of a “mentor” was however very narrow and only included faculty. “Mentor was defined as ‘someone on the faculty to whom students turned for advice, to review a paper, or for general support and encouragement’” (Nettles & Millet, 2006, p. 98). The mentor relationships that were present among the first generation and the second generation were complex dynamics that did not all fit within one traditional box. Mentorships took shape in multiple forms including: peer mentors, faculty mentors, and community mentors. By using the CRT and LatCRT lens to dissect these relationships, a subversive consideration of mentorships emerged that speaks to the differences in cultural norms among Black, Latino, and white communities. Considering the benefits of multiple types of mentor relationships is important because Black and Latino students sometimes have different cultural needs than their white peers. “Women and minorities might have different needs than other students. For instance...if a mentor does not understand a student’s culture and values, a problem might develop in the mentoring relationship” (Sligh DeWalt, 2005, p. 41). Cherie noted that:

*I just think that when Blacks folks come into this school they come in with a whole set of different issues than your average white person does. And I'm generalizing a ton here but this is just my overall assessment. When Black people come in they're coming in with their student loans, with financial problems, or they're coming in as the first person ever in their family to get to this point. It's a really big deal to have good mentorship. To have a mentor who's willing to help you and fight for you and help you get good fellowships, to help you get out quicker. It's a struggle to find that...and I don't know if white students have a different network or come in with a different mindset, but they're able to be a lot more lax about things. I don't feel I have the luxury to be relaxed in my department.*

Students of color may also be bringing the baggage of prior racial discrimination with them into these majority white spaces. In those sorts of instances it may be more beneficial for those students to find guidance among other groups.

Deborah, Walter, and María each found mentor relationships beyond faculty members. Deborah forged strong relationships with members in the outside community. They served as a mentor to her by helping to cultivate her commitment to activism within and outside of the academy. Walter and María both had peer mentors that were advanced graduate students. Because those peer mentors were still in graduate school, or had recently completed the process, they were able to provide uncensored insight about what to expect at each stage of the graduate process. In other research, similar benefits of peer mentor relationships were evident. In María S. Gaytán's (2004) article on her experiences with mentorship as a Latino student, she

examines the ways in which mentor relationships with graduate students help to reveal the truthful realities of managing graduate school. She first became aware of these truths as an undergraduate student when she began to study at the apartment of her graduate mentors.

It was there that I learned about the bliss and drudgery of graduate student life—or what Goffman (1959) called the ‘backstage’ of dramaturgical performance—where the ‘truthful’ management of graduate life takes place. In the backstage, actors are simultaneously safer and more vulnerable, compared with their ‘front stage’ performances. Thus, in the backstage of their apartment I learned the most valuable ‘tricks of the trade’ for surviving in graduate school. I was also introduced to other coping mechanisms that would serve as ‘fuel’ for getting through the long nights and early mornings that lay ahead. (Gaytán, 2004, p. 198).

The tools that were provided were not always formal conversations, but in some instances informal observations that were equally as important. In Walter’s case, watching his peer mentor type his dissertation gave him knowledge about what to expect when preparing a dissertation. While outside mentor relationships were critical, faculty mentorship was also an essential means of support. Each participant from both generations identified a faculty member that was supportive of them and their research. Some of those relationships were stronger than others, but nonetheless they were present.

The process of establishing and using mentors was also not limited entirely to graduate school. Some of my participants admitted to having faculty mentors during

their undergraduate experiences that may have contributed to their success in their doctoral programs. María, Cross, Cherie, and Juan, each had mentors in their undergraduate programs that played a role in their matriculation to graduate school. Both Cherie and Juan maintained those relationships upon entering their doctoral programs. Cherie's McNair mentor provided academic, social, and moral support.

*Some mentors are good for me and what I need to know professionally...but I also refer back to my mentor from the McNair program...and she constantly is a mentor from like my first year in the middle of the year I called her up and said, 'I have no idea what they're talking about and I feel like I can't do this' and she was the one like...I'll tell you what this is, let me break it down for you, and I was like okay. And she knows a lot of the faculty that I'm working with so she would also be able to tell me okay this person is like this, I've worked with them before or this is what you need to know. So in terms of very fundamental things, very social things, where I'll work after, very intimate things because she knows me and my husband well, and my family very well she's very much been a mentor to me so I have to thank her for that.*

Juan's McNair mentor also provided useful academic and social support.

*My main mentor is the one from undergrad. He is Mexican American and he really invested a lot in me. He is the one that connected me with the research university where I am at right now. He's the one that gives me great feedback, he's taken me out for beers, we've gone out to lunch several times, I've met members of his family... he's my mentor-mentor.*

Familial relationships were able to form in some mentor-mentee relationships. What's interesting to note about the faculty mentor relationships, was that unlike the peer networks, finding a same-race mentor was not as significant for some of my participants, so long as they received the support that they needed. In some instances faculty support simply meant supporting one's culturally relevant research interest. Walter, Cross, and Juan each admitted to having strong faculty support from white faculty members. In Deborah's experience she noted that *"I was less concerned with the person than with what their perspective was. So I sought out faculty who could help me with the ideas and goals that I was looking at. I wasn't necessarily searching out a Black faculty member because at that time there were very few."* In their study of doctoral education, Nettles & Millet (2006) discovered similar findings among Black and Latino students. "Both African Americans and Hispanics in every field reported few instances of having a same-race mentor. The biggest obstacle appears to be the availability of faculty of the same race" (Nettles & Millet, 2006, p. 100). Statistics reveal that minorities are still severely underrepresented as faculty in higher education. "In 2003, about 15 percent of faculty in U.S. colleges were minorities (based on a total excluding persons whose race/ethnicity was unknown, but including non resident aliens who were not identified by race/ethnicity)...Nearly half of all college faculty (47 percent) was white males, while 36 percent was White females" (cited in Thornton Dill, 2009, p.234). Despite having limited possibilities to work with same-race faculty mentors, both the first generation and second generation were able to acquire the guidance they needed through the formation of social and



navigational capital. Persistence and resiliency were also traits that I uncovered that were characteristic of both generations.

### **Persistence**

The tenets of aspirational capital unearthed several similarities in “persistence” among both the first generation and the second generation. Yosso’s (2005) framework sheds light on why resiliency is a form of capital that can promote the growth of persistence among students of color. “This resiliency is evidence in those who allow themselves and their children to dream of possibilities beyond their present circumstances, often without the objective means to attain those goals” (Yosso, 2005, p. 78). Each of my participants was able to develop the means necessary to navigate through graduate school. However, within their experiences they each faced various moments of adversity and they had to “dream of the possibilities” in order to be persistent and survive the journey. In the literature on student persistence, Vincent Tinto’s (1993) models for student departure from college are among the most well known. Although most of his models focused on college students, he did develop a model to understand the graduate school experience of persistence as well.

At the outset, the model posits that individual, most notably gender, age, race, ability, and social class, and individual educational experiences prior to entry to graduate school help shape individual goals...at entry. These help specify the orientations individuals bring with them to the task of completing a doctoral degree and, in turn, establish the conditions within

which subsequent interactions occur. Their impact upon persistence, though indirect, may be important in the long run (Tinto, 1993, p. 239).

Persistence within the context of this research focuses on the ways in which both groups of participants were able to continue on with their graduate studies despite encountering external barriers such as blatant or subtle acts of racism and or alienation. “Hope is what sustains the struggle for a better condition for Blacks in the academy—a better academy and a better world” (Hughes, 2005, p. 69).

The spaces of the classroom were a key site where subtle and blatant moments of racism were experienced. Both María and Walter were publicly humiliated during class and made to feel intellectually inferior amongst their white peers. Deborah also experienced blatant racial antagonism during her qualifying examination. “*My qualifying examination was to write on Arthur Jensen’s article that was published in the Harvard Review on the genetic inferiority of Black people. That was my qualifying question.*” Despite those harsh racial hostilities, they each cultivated and relied on an ethic of hope and resistance in order to successfully complete their degrees. For some of the second generation, more subtle instances of prejudice occurred within casual conversations and class discussions. When Cross first tried to build a network among his white peers he may not have confronted blatant, aggressive forms of discrimination, but the social spaces that were available to him were not inclusive and this was evident in some of the conversations he had with those peers. As he noted, many of his white peers engaged in what he considered to be acts of “passive racism.”

*My first year we were talking about the Oscars...and I think it was the year Denzel was up and one of my classmates just makes a comment that if he wins its something political it's not really an official Oscar. So it's like little things like that. They assault Oprah's book club. They try to...sound all hip-hopish sometimes when they talk to us...little things like that on their end might seem well-intentioned but on our end seems offensive.*

Like Cross, Elvira consistently experienced racially insensitive remarks within the classroom from one of her white peers. As she aptly noted: *“What I find, especially in these academic environments, is that white people who are racist hide behind academic jargon and they're still racist.”* As mentioned earlier, Cherie and her other Black colleagues suspected that the French oral examination grading process was racially biased after they noticed a pattern of white students immediately passing and all of the Black students repeatedly failing. In the face of difficulty, the second generation was able to pool together their various forms of social, navigational, resistance, and aspirational capital as a means of survival.

The narratives of the first generation and second generation, while not entirely identical, shed light on the ways in which persistence factors are formed and sustained among doctoral students of color. What these experiences also reveal is that racial identity and the experience of being marked as a racialized body are still cultural norms that shape the climate of PWIs and departments. As evinced by my findings among both the first generation and the second generation, Black and Latino students are still to differing degrees made to feel like “others” within some of these institutions and particularly within the classroom. In some ways, being aware of the

ways in which race still informs dialogues and experiences within academia, allows students of color to build a repository of hope and support in anticipation of racialized encounters.

African American doctoral candidates at predominantly White institutions should anticipate silencing, even by our liberal White peers and professors. We should anticipate internal dilemmas when considering our options and actions. We must also anticipate learning to rely upon ourselves and to draw from the positive energy and intellectual prowess of our predecessors to fulfill the requirements of doctoral education. We must struggle, but we must do as our ancestors did so ardently—cling to hope with each daily accomplishment (Hughes, 2005, p. 69).

In addition to building and sustaining hope, the examples of the first generation are and have been a source of motivation for many Black and Latino students of the second generation and have contributed to their persistence within the academy.

### *Differences Across Generations*

#### **Aggressive forms of social activism**

One of the largest factors that distinguished the first generation from the second generation was social activism. The first generation participants shared numerous stories of protests, sit-ins, and other aggressive acts of resistance to the racial climate and inequities of the time. And while activism was important for both Black and Latino students, there were some distinctions in their experiences. “In the late 1960s, Black student at predominantly White college and universities reevaluated

the education they received. Influenced by the emerging Black power movement, they sought to make their institutions receptive to their needs, representative of their culture, and relevant to their situation” (Williamson, 1999, p. 92). Deborah and Walter first entered graduate school in the latter part of the 1960s. They each challenged faculty racism, fought for Black Studies programs, and the increased representation of minority students. In addition to fighting for Black Studies, Walter and his peers worked to build a stronger sense of community among the Black students on campus.

*I was president of the Black Student Union from April 1968-November 1968.*

*We were pushing for Black studies...As a student activist our main interactions were with Black students...I know when I first arrived Black students were hardly speaking to each other in many ways. And there was an organization called ‘Harambee’ which later became the BSU. Our concern was trying to create community among Black students. We had interactions with Latinos but there was no formalized interaction with white students.*

Although there were interactions with Latino students at the time, the central issues the BSU addressed concerned African Americans. Deborah also acknowledged the role that Latinos played in her social justice initiatives. “*I was a graduate student in 69’. So when we did our first set of demands one of our demands was that they increase the numbers of Latinos and Native American students.*” Despite the limited presence of Latino students, Deborah and her peers still included Latino issues within their struggles for equity. In their article, “From Visibility to Autonomy: Latinos and Higher Education in the U.S., 1965-2005,” MacDonald, Botti & Hoffman Clark

(2007) noted that because Latinos as a racial minority were invisible from many of the earlier battles for racial equality within higher education, they achieved access to certain resources at a later date than African American students. However, as their presence increased within PWIs they began to fight for issues specifically related to Latino communities. As evinced by Deborah's narrative, sometimes those battles were fought with African American students. "Sometimes in tandem with Black students and sometimes alone, Latino youth worked to expand such access through a variety of grassroots efforts" (cited in MacDonald, Botti, & Hoffman Clark, 2007, p. 482).

In the mid to late seventies as the representation of Latino students increased, more battles were waged. "Latinos led the second major effort to promote the expansion of higher education opportunity. Aided and inspired by the African American civil rights movement, Latino self-agency proved a significant element in cultivating access to colleges and universities, as youth efforts throughout the 1960s helped illuminate the specific concerns of the Hispanic minority" (MacDonald, Botti, & Hoffman-Clark, 2007, p. 481).

Both María and Carlos started graduate school in the 1970s and their experiences reflect the patterns identified by MacDonald, Botti & Hoffman Clark (2007).

Although María participated in demonstrations against the *Bakke* (1978) decision and other social justice initiatives, like Walter she also focused on issues directly impacting her racial community. One issue in particular involved supporting the United Farm Workers union. Carlos also focused on issues directly impacting

Chicano students. He and his peers actively campaigned for the recruitment of more Chicano students of all socio-economic backgrounds at Hallmark.

Even though Walter, Deborah, María, and Carlos concentrated on issues that directly impacted their own racial/ethnic communities, each of their historical recounts reveals how and why social activism was an urgent, and almost obligatory quest for the first generation. The groundswell of change that was taking place within the academy during the 1960s and 1970s was not just because of Affirmative Action and other policies, it was also because the generation of scholars that were amongst the first to integrate these spaces in large numbers, actively fought for a more inclusive racial climate that mirrored the broader societal struggles for change outside of those institutions.

### **Academic Challenges/Self-Doubt**

Academic challenges, coupled with self-doubt, and the pressure to positively represent one's entire race were themes that emerged when the second generation participants discussed their initial experiences in graduate school. Minus the experiences of María, these themes were an important factor that distinguished the experiences of the first generation and the second generation. Cherie and Cross admitted that during their first semester of graduate school they felt out of place because it felt as if they had to learn a different language in order to participate in class discussion. In Raymond Herrera's (2003) narrative on his graduate experience as a Chicano student, he mentions encountering similar barriers.

As for the actual coursework and academic rigor, I was not adequately prepared. It took me a while to figure out how to study, how to write, how to

engage in class at the graduate level...I noticed that most of the other students did not seem to be as lost or overwhelmed by the coursework. My peers seemed to be rolling along, challenged, but not overwhelmed. They talked the language of the professors, understood their jokes, and it seemed that they had known each other for years (Herrera, 2003, p. 117).

This pattern of experiencing a language barrier as a student of color, implies that there were also underlying cultural barriers in place that contributed to the academic marginalization of these students. In addition, both Cross and Cherie had to adjust to an entirely different, less inclusive academic environment, after attending historically Black colleges.

During Juan's first semester of graduate school he also encountered some academic difficulties. When one of his professors asked him how he was adjusting, he explained the difficulties he was experiencing. *"She asked if I was having trouble adjusting and I told her a little because it's cold out here, my family is not out here, and I didn't feel like I had a good friend-base."* Like Cherie and Cross, the change in academic culture and climate was a contributing factor in why he experienced academic difficulties. Plus, unlike the first generation, the second generation was not as actively involved in community based initiatives and social activism outside of their institutions. Consequently, in many ways they appeared to be much more consumed by the doctoral process than some of their predecessors. Thus, the second generation's academic and intellectual vulnerabilities and insecurities were magnified in comparison to the first generation.



### **Formal graduate preparation: (P.P.P)**

During the sixties and seventies many Black and Latino students that integrated PWIs did so at the expense of not having any formal support within those spaces. As Higginbotham (2001) noted in her study on the experiences of Black women college students during the era of integration:

It was incumbent upon these racial pioneers to build their own informal supports, because college administrators in the mid-1960s did little to anticipate the realities of desegregation...The women had to build supportive networks for themselves in order to thrive in college, especially when they were separated from family and friends” (p. 186-187).

Much like the informal supports developed by my first generation participants, many of those networks created important cultural spaces for students of color to “reaffirm their racial identity” (Higginbotham, 2001, p. 186). Despite the emergence of fellowship opportunities like the Ford and Danforth, that provided financial support for students of color to pursue graduate education, there were no formal preparatory programs in place that shared fundamental information about how to prepare for graduate school. In many ways, programs like McNair and Mellon were a response to these deficiencies. The second generation reaped the benefits of the lessons learned from the first generation and were given the institutional supports needed to seriously pursue doctorates. They were given mentors and a vast network of students of color. Although each second generation participant later went on to build their own networks and strategies separate from their Pre-doctoral Prep Programs, it was

those programs that helped to establish the foundation that would later enable them to create and sustain mentor and peer relationships on their own.

### *Other Patterns*

In addition to some of the similarities and differences in capital formation that were uncovered, there were also several other smaller patterns that surfaced within this research.

### **Culturally Relevant Research: Why are all the Black and Latino kids doing Black and Latino Research?**

The title of this section is a direct reference to Beverly D. Tatum's (1997) book *Why are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* The vast majority of my participants from both generations conducted research that was directly tied to their racial/ethnic background. As mentioned earlier, cultural spaces are important components in identity development particularly for students of color at predominantly white institutions (Tatum, 1997). Exploring culturally relevant research interests are one way to create cultural spaces, and affirm one's identity. Tatum (1997) uses the model of the Black church to exemplify this notion.

“Many Black churches with an Afrocentric perspective are providing the culturally relevant information for which Black adults hunger. For example, in some congregations an informational African American history moment is part of the worship service and Bible study includes a discussion of the Black presence in the bible. As these examples suggest, there are sources of

information within Black communities that will speak to the identity development needs of both young and older adults” (Tatum, 1997, p. 83).

In this example, Black churches worked to redefine the white norms that characterized the bible by infusing the narratives with Black experiences. Walter, Juan, María, Cherie, and Cross each mentioned in their narratives that the curriculum in their respective departments was limited and not always culturally inclusive. By subverting historical paradigms of Eurocentric curriculum, students from these communities were able to dispel certain myths about their racial/ethnic communities that had been promoted within some academic canons. “Scholars have sought to reclaim and present the stories and lives of previously silenced groups, and to define new areas of scholarship such as Black feminist studies, Chicana studies, etc.” (Thornton Dill, 2009, p. 233). For these various reasons, some Black and Latino students undertake Black and Latino research in order to affirm their personal identities.

### **Generation Gap**

Even though each of my first generation participants were senior professors at predominantly white institutions, they revealed only basic knowledge about what persistent issues currently impact students of color within the academy. They each postulated possible circumstances that current Black and Latino students may endure, but it was clear (with the exception of María) that they were not actively engaged in regular dialogues or interventions with current doctoral students of color about their experiences. This may have been a result of the fact that they each were senior faculty at research I institutions, thus making them more inaccessible and out of touch than

junior level faculty of color. Furthermore, Walter and Deborah's belief that the current generation is not building "collectives" or does not understand the struggles that afforded students of color with the opportunity to attend predominantly white institutions mismatches what I uncovered from my actual interviews with the second generation. What this reveals is that there may be a serious disconnect or generation gap with senior faculty of color that have been within the academy thirty or more years and the current generation of students. The concept of "community" has transformed within the academy, and while the current generation may not be social activists, my findings indicate that they are establishing their own types of communities and forming their own cultural spaces. More conversations should be established with staggered generations of scholars from the sixties, seventies, eighties, nineties, and now as a way to build cultural exchanges and further build and sustain the *academic cultural wealth* needed to maneuver through PWIs as a person of color.

### **Migrant Farm-worker Family Background**

By using LatCRT as a theoretical lens, I uncovered some of the ways in which my Chicano participant's experiences differed from my African American participants. For example, María, Carlos, Juan, and Elvira each missed critical time from elementary and secondary school because they traveled with their families to do seasonal work in different regions. Despite the necessary absences to help support their families, both Juan, Elvira, and María's families stressed the importance of education. María's mother wanted her children to have a college education but she was unsure how to navigate the process. "*My mother had an 8<sup>th</sup> grade education, and*

*my father had a high school education. My mother wanted college for her daughters but didn't know how to go about it.*" The cultural differences of growing up Chicano and as a migrant farm worker were evident in terms of class disparities too.

The class differences among my Black and Latino participants revealed that education was a means to an end for some of my Latino participants. Both Juan and Elvira noted that it was important for them to pursue college and graduate school because they knew their families could benefit from the additional financial support. School was also significant for Carlos because it became a space for him to escape the rigorous physical labor of farm-work in exchange for the intellectual labor of the classroom. In his chapter, "A Chicano Farmworker in Academe," Adalberto Aguirre (1995), shares similar sentiments when he recounts moments of envy watching other children drive by in cars while he worked the fields.

On one particular day, the temperature was around 110 degrees, the flies were buzzing louder than ever, and the ground was harder than usual. I stopped working. I watched the cars traveling on the highway that ran alongside the cotton field. I saw families traveling in air-conditioned cars. Mom, dad, and the kids looked happy. It just didn't seem fair. I decided then that that summer would be my last as a migrant farmworker (Aguirre, 1995, p. 17).

The determination to use education as a means of upward mobility was a narrative that was particularly useful at unearthing the ways in which class shaped the educational endeavors and persistence among some of my Latino participants.

Impermeable family ties were also cultural narratives implicit within some of the first generation and second generation experiences. When Carlos and Juan, first

decided to attend college far from home they both confronted some apprehensions from their families about moving far away. Strong family ties and kinship networks are important cultural factors in many Latino communities. “For decades familialism has been considered to be a defining feature of life in Latina and Latino communities. Presumably, family relations are more important for Latinas and Latinos than for other groups” (Oboler & Gonzalez, 2005, p. 93). The emphasis on family may have been one of the reasons why both Juan and Carlos were met with some opposition. Juan remembered that: *“At first there was a big resistance for my participation in higher education because I have cousins that have their college degrees, but they never left home. They got their college degrees from extension schools.”* In order to convince their parents to let them go, they had to explain the benefits of going to those schools. Carlos recalled that:

*Well nobody knew where Columbia was, not in my family. We were all very poor and the highest aspiration for most of the family was graduating from high school. That was a significant accomplishment because most people didn't graduate from high school. But when I told my Mom about that she was worried, but then I told her it was paid for, and she said ‘Oh if it's paid for then go.’*

Laura Rendón (2002) cites similar experiences in her article “From the Barrio to the Academy: Revelations of a Mexican American Scholarship Girl.” When she tried to transfer from her junior college to a four-year institution far from home, her mother and father had doubts. “My parents told me that if I must transfer, I should go to a nearby institution. I felt however, that I needed to go further away to experience

something dramatically different” (Rendón, 2002, p. 318). Each of these experiences reveals the ways in which ethnic and cultural differences shaped the experiences of my Latino participants. In future research, I would like to explore more about how students from working class backgrounds bring those cultural narratives with them into the spaces of the academy.

## ***PART TWO: IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS***

### ***Implications and Recommendations for Practice and Future Research***

The findings of this research contribute to our understanding of what patterns have remained the same, and what patterns have changed in the graduate school experience for Black and Latino students over time. By comparing the experiences of two different generations of doctoral students, implications for understanding the impact of culture and climate on under-representation emerged. Future research on this topic must excavate more historical accounts of the graduate school experience as a way to inform current practices and policy. Additional implications on how diversity shapes race relations in American higher education were also evident.

Built from CRT, WhiteCRT as a theory examines the racial construction of whiteness and the benefits that are attributed to being white. “The study of ‘Whiteness’ emerged in response to its absence in scholarly investigations of race” (Henderson & Tickamyer, 2009, p. 59). WhiteCRT is a particularly useful theory to interrogate the implications of culture and climate within P.W.I.s because it reveals the ways in which white cultural norms are hidden within the policies and practices of those institutions. Those practices in favor of white identities can contribute to such things as institutional racism and the overall feelings of isolation and exclusion

experienced by some students of color. Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, (2002) offer several examples of how this might take shape. “The best example is resistance to desegregations in communities and specific campus settings, the maintenance of old campus policies at predominantly White institutions that best serve a homogenous population, and attitudes and behaviors that prevent interaction across race and ethnicity. Because they are embedded in the culture of historically segregated environments, many campuses sustain long-standing, often unrecognized, benefits for particular student groups” (cited in Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 2002, p. 673). And because whiteness can operate as an ‘unmarked category’ the impact of those nuanced biases can go unexamined. “Whiteness is everywhere in American culture...As the unmarked category against which difference is constructed, whiteness never has to speak its name, never has to acknowledge its role as an organizing principle in social and cultural relations” (Lipsitz, 1995, p. 369).

Within the context of this research, the patterns of blatant and subtle racial encounters experienced across both generations indicate that there are pervasive external factors that have withstood the test of time that may contribute to the under-representation of Black and Latino students. The “language” barriers that the second generation mentioned are evidence that there are practices within many graduate programs that favor white identities. With that in mind, it is clear as to why current students of color may feel intimidated or academically under-prepared when they enter doctoral programs. Many of their insecurities are not the result of intellectual inferiority, but rather the result of rigid, racially exclusive practices that only superficially invite students of color to participate. In the face of these barriers, the



level of persistence exhibited by the first generation and second generation exemplify a historical legacy of resilience that has characterized many minority communities. However, these student populations are expected to exert additional amounts of prowess and hopefulness beyond that expected of their white peers in order to survive within the academy.

Race will always be a social construct from which Black and Latino students operate and define themselves and their experiences. What this research reveals is that there needs to be greater efforts to allow these students to embrace their racial identities without forced assimilation, or fear of persecution for their research interest, or their racially homogenous peer groups. “People of color are often changed by higher education, but now institutions themselves must change in order accommodate culturally diverse student populations” (Rendón, 2002, p. 316). In order to increase the representation, of Black and Latino doctoral students, predominantly white institutions should initiate and sustain formal efforts that facilitate the creation and acceptance of Black and Latino peer networks. Pre-doctoral Prep Programs can serve as an ideal paragon for many academic departments to model at the graduate level because those programs proved to be an important asset in constructing formal networks for students of color.

Thornton Dill, Zambrana, & McLaughlin’s (2009) case study on the emergence of the Consortium on Race, Gender, and Ethnicity (CRGE) at the University of Maryland, College Park, is also a powerful example of how institutions can change to accommodate students and faculty of color, particularly those pursuing culturally relevant research. “The consortium is an association of academic units and

individual faculty on the University of Maryland campus whose mission is to promote, advance, and conduct research, scholarship, and faculty and student development that examines the intersections of race, gender, and ethnicity with other dimensions of difference” (Thornton Dill, Zambrana, & McLaughlin, 2009, p. 257). In addition to creating a safe space where culturally relevant research issues can emerge, CRGE also created a program for graduate students that was designed to provide them with critical mentoring and strategies for graduate school. “CRGE Interdisciplinary Scholars Program (CrISP) provides graduate students with an opportunity to learn firsthand the processes of research, administration, and publication through a mentoring relationship with CRGE faculty” (Thornton Dill, Zambrana, & McLaughlin, 2009, p.265). Although the program provides support to *all* students, the impact is greater for students of color in the program because of the historical legacy of exclusion that continues to shape their experiences within the academy. “Faculty and students of color are likely to find themselves in settings where they are isolated and often misunderstood. A program like the CrISP program may provide a safe and supportive environment for a student that may not have that level of support or understanding within their home department” (Thornton Dill, Zambrana, & McLaughlin, 2009, p. 267). Likewise, in the Minority and Urban Education (MUE) program at UMCP, faculty began a pro-seminar for new Ph.D. students in the fall of 2007 to create a “safe” space for new students to learn from advanced graduate students, vent, and discuss racial topics free from censure. If more institutions created programs, centers, or departments modeled after CRGE or the MUE pro-seminar, it’s likely that more students of color would develop interests

in pursuing doctorates if they know there were cultural spaces in place to nurture their identities and their scholarship.

Furthermore, campus administrators, department faculty, and other key stakeholders in higher education need to work to reduce the stigma associated with race-conscious centers and programs. “If White students or faculty do not understand why Black or Latino or Asian cultural centers are necessary, then they need to be helped to understand” (Tatum, 1997, p. 250). These spaces are a necessary component in the identity formation for students of color. Additionally, these spaces can also benefit majority students and faculty as well, by enriching the diversity on campuses.

Research evidence clearly indicates that greater exposure to racial and ethnic diversity in college leads to growth in democracy outcomes. Students who have been exposed to greater diversity are more likely to demonstrate increases in racial understanding, cultural awareness, and appreciation, engagement with social and political issues, and openness to diversity and challenge (Milem & Hakuta, 2002, p. 408).

As evinced by the perpetual battles against Affirmative Action programs, there is a clear misunderstanding by some white students and faculty about the role and importance of race conscious or cultural specific initiatives. In order to raise cultural awareness, thoughtful approaches, not superficial solutions like admitting a marginal amount of students of color, should be designed to facilitate cultural exchanges.

### Limitations

The scope of this research was intended to primarily examine the role that race plays in the experiences of students of color at predominantly white institutions. However, there were several other factors that may have augmented this research that are limitations of this study. When I set out to do this research, one of my goals was to explore how the intersections of race/ethnicity, class and gender impact Black and Latino students. However, within my analytical framework race dominated the conversation and issues around gender were never fully teased out and examined. In addition to gender, this research also did not consider the role of sexuality and sexual preferences within those experiences. As a result, many of my findings and analysis are presented through a heteronormative lens. In future research, I hope to delve more into the ways in which the role and acceptance of sexuality has evolved within the academy over time. Other limitations of this study center on the discussion and analysis of Black and Latino relations. Additional research is needed to flesh out the nuanced dynamics of their interactions together within higher education.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study has attempted to explore the issue of Black and Latino underrepresentation in doctoral programs by examining the evolution of their experiences then, during the 1960s-1970s, and now during the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This research was initiated in part by my own experiences as a doctoral student of color attending a P.W.I. In an effort to understand more about my own experiences, I designed a study that would not only explore what patterns were present within the experiences of Black and Latino students, but that would also provide a historical context to further

understand why certain trends exist. I was able to unearth several critical factors that impacted their experiences by examining and comparing the culture and climate of predominantly white institutions over time, coupled with the tools and strategies employed by these student populations to navigate through the doctoral process. The major findings of this study revealed that the culture and climate of predominantly white institutions, as it pertains to doctoral students of color, is still marred by racism. In order to combat these forms of oppression, both generations of scholars that I interviewed heavily relied on the support of other students of color. Those peer networks were a major source of motivation, inspiration, and persistence. This pattern suggests that it is vital to increase the numbers of Black and Latino students within academia because their increased presence positively impacts their academic success and retention. A major contribution of this study is that it can be situated within multiple fields. Within American Studies it broadens traditional discussions of race and identity by situating the conversation within the context of education and exploring its role in relation to subversive forms of social capital. Furthermore, within higher education the existing literature is replete with contemporary experiences of Black and Latino students. There are few studies like this one that formally compare the historical and contemporary experiences, thus permitting a more nuanced understanding of change over time.

On a practical level this research is also valuable because it provides predominantly white institutions, departments, faculty, and students with a better understanding of what factors shape the experiences of Black and Latino students in graduate school. Moreover, is also provided a cultural narrative of empowerment

through which I, and hopefully other doctoral students of color, can use to affirm our identities and their experiences.

## Appendix A: Institutional Review Board Approval



UNIVERSITY OF  
MARYLAND

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

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July 31, 2007

### MEMORANDUM

*Application Approval Notification*

**To:** Dr. Victoria-Maria MacDonald  
Kristen N. Hodge  
Department of American Studies

**From:** Roslyn Edson, M.S., CIP *RE*  
IRB Manager  
University of Maryland, College Park

**Re:** **IRB Number** 07-0355  
**Project Title:** "Diversity and the Doctorate: The Experiences of Black and Latino Doctoral Students"

**Approval Date:** July 26, 2007

**Expiration Date:** July 26, 2008

**Type of Application:** New Project

**Type of Research:** Nonexempt  
(Please note: The research does not qualify for exempt review because 1) the audiotaped interview responses are person identifiable 2) the investigator will maintain an identification key and 3) the inadvertent disclosure of some of these data outside the research could be damaging to a subject's reputation and employability.)

**Type of Review**  
**For Application:** Expedited

The University of Maryland, College Park Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved your IRB application. The research was approved in accordance with 45 CFR 46, the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, and the University's IRB policies and procedures. Please reference the above-cited IRB application number in any future communications with our office regarding this research.

**Recruitment/Consent:** For research requiring written informed consent, the IRB-approved and stamped informed consent document is enclosed. The IRB approval expiration date has been stamped on the informed consent document. Please keep copies of the consent forms used for this research for three years after the completion of the research.

**Continuing Review:** If you intend to continue to collect data from human subjects or to analyze private, identifiable data collected from human subjects, after the expiration date for this approval (indicated above), you must submit a renewal application to the IRB Office at least 30 days before the approval expiration date.

*(continued)*

**Modifications:** Any changes to the approved protocol must be approved by the IRB before the change is implemented, except when a change is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. If you would like to modify the approved protocol, please submit an addendum request to the IRB Office. The instructions for submitting a request are posted on the IRB web site at: [http://www.umresearch.umd.edu/IRB/irb\\_Addendum%20Protocol.htm](http://www.umresearch.umd.edu/IRB/irb_Addendum%20Protocol.htm).

**Unanticipated Problems Involving Risks:** You must promptly report any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others to the IRB Manager at 301-405-0678 or [redaon@umresearch.umd.edu](mailto:redaon@umresearch.umd.edu).

**Student Researchers:** Unless otherwise requested, this IRB approval document was sent to the Principal Investigator (PI). The PI should pass on the approval document or a copy to the student researchers. This IRB approval document may be a requirement for student researchers applying for graduation. The IRB may not be able to provide copies of the approval documents if several years have passed since the date of the original approval.

**Additional Information:** Please contact the IRB Office at 301-405-4212 if you have any IRB-related questions or concerns.



## Appendix B: “Study Participants Needed” Flyer

STUDY PARTICIPANTS NEEDED!!!

Are You a Full-Time Doctoral Student?

Are you enrolled in an Arts/Humanities Program?

Are you African American or Latino/a?

Study participants are needed for a dissertation project seeking to gain an in-depth understanding about the experiences of Black and Latino/doctoral students at Predominantly White Institutions.

### CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPANTS:

1. African American or Latino/a Males and Females
2. Currently enrolled in an Arts/Humanities doctoral program at a Predominantly White Institution
3. Enrolled at an institution on the East Coast or in the Southeast
4. Participated in any form of a pre-doctoral preparatory program (i.e. McNair, Mellon, IRT)

\*Confidentiality will be maintained by assigning pseudonyms for participant names and institutions

### DETAILS OF PARTICIPATION:

1. Complete a brief questionnaire (5-10 minutes)
2. Participate in 2 separate interview sessions each about 1 hour in length that will take place at a date/time and location of the participant's choice

***\* All participants will receive a \$25 Barnes and Nobles Gift Card***

Please Contact Kristen Hodge at [hodgekristen@yahoo.com](mailto:hodgekristen@yahoo.com) for further details

# Appendix C: Study Outline

## Study Outline

### *Diversity and the Doctorate: The Experiences of Black and Latino Doctoral Students*

Kristen N. Hodge

#### Proposal Abstract

From 1976-77 to 2003-04 the number of doctorates awarded to all minorities only rose from 7.7% to 15.2% (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2005). Of the 43, 398 doctorates conferred during the 2003-04 school year, African Americans accounted for 2,727 (5.4 %) and Latinos accounted for 1,558 (3.2 %) of that total. (Cook & Cordova, American Council of Education [ACE], 2006, Table 18). Despite marginal gains in the number of Black and Latino students pursuing and earning doctorates since the 1970s, they continue to be severely under-represented in doctoral education. In an effort to better understand the historical phenomenon of under-representation at the doctoral level among Black and Latino students, I will conduct a qualitative study of a select group of former and current Black and Latino doctoral students in order to extend the current discourse beyond quantitative studies and personal narratives. The purpose of this research is to gain a deeper understanding and learn more about the lived experiences of current and former Black and Latino doctoral students as a way to address the phenomenon of under-representation. My research objective is to use student perspectives from the 60s-70s and currently during the 21<sup>st</sup> century to construct a historical narrative of their experiences. My ultimate goal with this research is to be able to make suggestions about how to increase the presence of these student populations by evaluating if the experiences of Black and Latino doctoral students have changed over time and what that may or may not mean about the culture and climate of American higher education.

#### Participant Criteria

1. African-American or Latino/a (including Chicano/a) Males and Females
2. Arts/Humanities doctoral program
3. Predominantly White Institution
4. Pre-doctoral Prep Program (any type of program designed to prepare students for doctoral education)

#### Details of Participation

1. **Informed Consent form (5-8 minutes):** All participants will be required to sign and date an informed consent form that details participant requirements, confidentiality, risks of research, benefits of research, who to contact about questions.
2. **Written Questionnaire (5 minutes):** The questionnaire is a basic survey to obtain basic demographic information about the participant's background.

**3. First Interview Session (approximately 1 hour):** the purpose of the first interview session is to gather more detailed background information about the participant and to learn more about their perspective on contemporary issues of race/class/gender.

**4. Second Interview Session (approximately 1 hour, only current students):** the purpose of the second interview session is to gather more information specifically about the participant's graduate experiences and to learn more about their perspective on contemporary issues in higher education.

*\* All participants will receive a \$25 Barnes and Nobles gift card upon completion of the second interview session and receipt of the consent form and background questionnaire.*

Confidentiality:

Participant names and institutions will not be included on collected data (including written questionnaire), or dissertation documents. A pseudonym will be assigned to participants and their graduate institutions.

\*Member checks: Participants will have the opportunity to review interview notes and transcriptions, once they are typed, to ensure accuracy.

Phone Interviewees:

For those participants involved in phone interviews instead of in-person interviews please provide your current mailing address so that all forms and the gift card can be mailed to you. Upon completion please mail the informed consent form and written questionnaire to:

**Thank you for your support!**

## Appendix D: Consent Form

<b>Project Title</b>	<i>Diversity and the Doctorate</i>
<b>Why is this research being done?</b>	<i>This is a research project being conducted by Kristen N. Hodge at the University of Maryland, College Park. We are inviting you to participate in this research because you are African American or Latino/a and are/were enrolled in a doctoral program at a predominantly white institution. The purpose of this research is to learn more about the lived experiences of Black and Latino doctoral students at predominantly white institutions.</i>
<b>What will I be asked to do?</b>	<i>The procedures involve two interview sessions, during which you will complete a demographic questionnaire and then participate in two separate interviews. (Please see attached questionnaire and interview guide). The total time for your participation will be 2 hours. The first interview sessions will be for 1 hour and the second interview session will also be for 1 hour. Each interview will occur on separate days at a place and time agreed upon by you and Kristen N. Hodge.</i>
<b>What about confidentiality?</b>	<p><i>We will do our best to keep your personal information confidential. To help protect your confidentiality: (1) your name will not be included on the questionnaire or other collected data; (2) a pseudonym will be placed on the questionnaire and other collected data; (3) through the use of an identification key, the researcher will be able to link your questionnaire and other to your identity; and (4) only the researcher will have access to the identification key. If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible.</i></p> <p><i>This research project involves making [audiotapes] of you during both interview sessions. The audio tapes/photos are being made for transcribing purposes. The principal investigator, Dr. Victoria-Marie MacDonald, and the co-principal investigator, Kristen N. Hodge, will have access to the audiotapes. The audiotapes will be stored in the home office of Kristen N. Hodge. The records of this research will be destroyed upon the completion and approval of Kristen N. Hodge's dissertation.</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>I agree to be audio-taped during my participation in this study.</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>I do not agree to be audio-taped during my participation in this study</i></p> <p><i>Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law.</i></p>
<b>What are the risks of this research?</b>	<i>The possible social or psychological risks for you may derive from your willing disclosure of your family, and/ or academic experiences. There are no physical, financial, or legal risks for you.</i>

<b>Project Title</b>	<i>Diversity and the Doctorate</i>
<b>What are the benefits of this research?</b>	<i>This research is not designed to help you personally, but the results may help the investigator learn more about the experiences of doctoral students of color at predominantly white institutions. We hope that, in the future, other people/institutions/organizations might benefit from this study through improved understanding of what strategies should be implemented to increase representation and retentions of doctoral students of color.</i>
<b>Do I have to be in this research? Can I stop participating at any time?</b>	<i>Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify.</i>
<b>What if I have questions?</b>	<i>This research is being conducted by Kristen N. Hodge at the University of Maryland, College Park. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact Kristen N Hodge at: The University of Maryland, Holzapfel Hall, or hodgekristen@yahoo.com If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact: <b>Institutional Review Board Office, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, 20742; (e-mail) <a href="mailto:irb@deans.umd.edu">irb@deans.umd.edu</a>; (telephone) 301-405-0678</b> This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.</i>
<b>Statement of Age of Subject and Consent</b>	<i>Your signature indicates that:        you are at least 18 years of age;;        the research has been explained to you;        your questions have been answered; and        you freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this research project.</i>

<b>Project Title</b>	<i>Diversity and the Doctorate</i>	
<b>Signature and Date</b>	<b>NAME OF SUBJECT</b>	
	<b>SIGNATURE OF SUBJECT</b>	
	<b>DATE</b>	

## Appendix E: Interview Guide Second Generation

### First Interview Session

1. Describe your family background?
2. What were your experiences like growing-up?
3. How do you feel *race/class/gender* impacted your experiences growing up?
4. Define what “diversity” means to you.
5. Currently how do you think “diversity” is functioning in U.S. Society? In Higher Education? In your Department?
6. What do you believe are the perceptions of people from your race/ethnicity in U.S. Society?
  - a. Within higher education?
7. How would you describe your personal experiences with diversity?
8. What are your thoughts about Affirmative Action?
9. How have you experienced or not experienced Affirmative Action in your life?
10. How did or has your family background influenced your decision to attend graduate school?
11. What are/were your family member’s thoughts about your participation in higher education?
12. What type of institution did you attend in undergrad?
13. Why did you decide to pursue a Ph.D.?
14. What historical events were occurring when your started undergrad? Graduate School?

## **Second Interview Session**

1. How has/was your undergraduate and graduate school experiences been similar or different?
2. What do you believe are the necessary tools for successful graduate completion?

Have you had access to all of these tools in your program?

3. What stage are you in your program?
4. Describe the racial diversity within your doctoral department?
5. How many students of color were/are there in your program?
6. Describe the racial climate of your department?
7. What were your initial experiences in your department as a student of color?
8. How did/have those experiences evolved throughout your matriculation?
9. What are/were your research interests?
10. How was/has your research been received in your department?
11. What was/has the faculty support system like in your department?
12. Do you have a faculty mentor?
13. What type of rapport do you have with the students in your department?
14. What have/were your experiences been like interacting with white students?  
With white Faculty?
15. Were/are there any social networks specifically for students of your  
race/class/gender?
16. Did/does your department offer culturally-relevant courses for your needs?
17. How satisfied were/are you with your department's curriculum?
18. What are your career aspirations?
19. What forms of professional development have you had access to?



20. What does your funding package consists of?
21. What are your thoughts about the severe under-representation of Black and Latino men in higher education?
22. Are there any collaborative efforts among the Black and Latino student populations in your department?
23. What has been the most difficult experience for you as student of color in your department?
24. What have been the most useful things to you as doctoral student of color in your department?
25. Overall how would you describe your experiences as a doctoral student of color at a predominantly white institution?

## Appendix F: Interview Guide First Generation

1. Tell me a little bit about your family background and you experiences growing up.
2. What were you schooling experiences like growing up?
3. Tell me about you undergrad experiences.
4. Why did you decide to pursue a Ph.D.?
5. What was the culture and climate like in grad school at a P.W.I. as a person of color?
6. Did you receive any minority fellowships or participate in any programs specifically for minorities during that time?
  - a. From your understanding why were these programs created?
7. What were your views on affirmative action at the time you were pursuing your doctorate? What are your views now on affirmative Action?
8. How, if at all, did Affirmative Action impact your experiences in undergrad or grad school?
9. What other historical events occurred during your undergrad/grad tenure?
10. Do you think minority fellowships or opportunities are still necessary today?
11. How if at all do you think the culture and climate of doctoral education has changed for students of color now pursuing doctorates at P.W.I?
12. Some of the most striking patterns I gathered from current doctoral students included: *What are your thoughts about these patterns and did you have any of these same experiences?*
  - a. Distant interactions with white peers in the department and developed close friendships with other students of color. However racial background of their mentor was not as important so long as that person was supportive.
  - b. Feel like they're viewed as the "exception" to their race
  - c. Research interest were culturally relevant
  - d. Participation in any form of a Pre-Doctoral Prep Program strongly prepared them for the potential racial dynamics of attending a P.W.I.
  - e. Strong level of "appreciation" for being paid to go to school

## Appendix G: Demographic Survey

### Written Questionnaire Second Generation

*Confidentiality: I will do my best to keep your personal information confidential. To help protect your confidentiality: (1) your name will not be included on the questionnaire or other collected data; (2) a pseudonym will be placed on the questionnaire and other collected data; (3) through the use of an identification key, the researcher will be able to link your questionnaire and other to your identity; and (4) only the researcher will have access to the identification key. If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible.*

#### Preferred Pseudonym

---

1. How would you describe your race?

2. Where were you born?

3. What is your date of birth?

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed to date  
(Please list all degrees awarded or expected conferral date)?

5. What year did you start your doctoral program?

6. What is your current field of study?

7. What is your parents' highest educational level?

Father\_\_\_\_\_

Mother\_\_\_\_\_

8. How would you describe your socio-economic background? (Circle One)

Upper Class    Upper-Middle Class    Middle Class    Lower-Middle Class  
Lower Class

9. What is your marital status? (Circle One)

Married    Separated    Divorced    Widowed    Never Married  
Other\_\_\_\_\_

## Written Questionnaire First Generation

*Confidentiality: I will do my best to keep your personal information confidential. To help protect your confidentiality: (1) your name will not be included on the questionnaire or other collected data; (2) a pseudonym will be placed on the questionnaire and other collected data; (3) through the use of an identification key, the researcher will be able to link your questionnaire and other to your identity; and (4) only the researcher will have access to the identification key. If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible.*

### Preferred Pseudonym

---

10. How would you describe your race?

11. Where were you born?

12. What is your date of birth?

13. What is the highest level of education you have completed to date?  
(Please list all degrees awarded)

14. What year did you start your doctoral program? What year did you finish your Ph.D.?

15. What was your field of study in graduate school?

16. What is your current field of study or occupation?

17. How would you describe your socio-economic background growing up?  
(Circle One)

Upper Class   Upper-Middle Class   Middle Class   Lower-Middle Class   Lower Class

18. What was your marital status in graduate school? (Circle One)

Married   Separated   Divorced   Widowed   Never Married  
Other\_\_\_\_\_

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